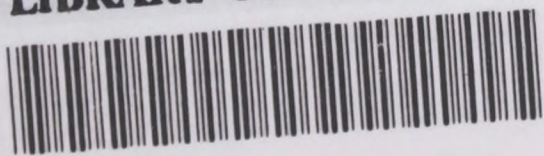


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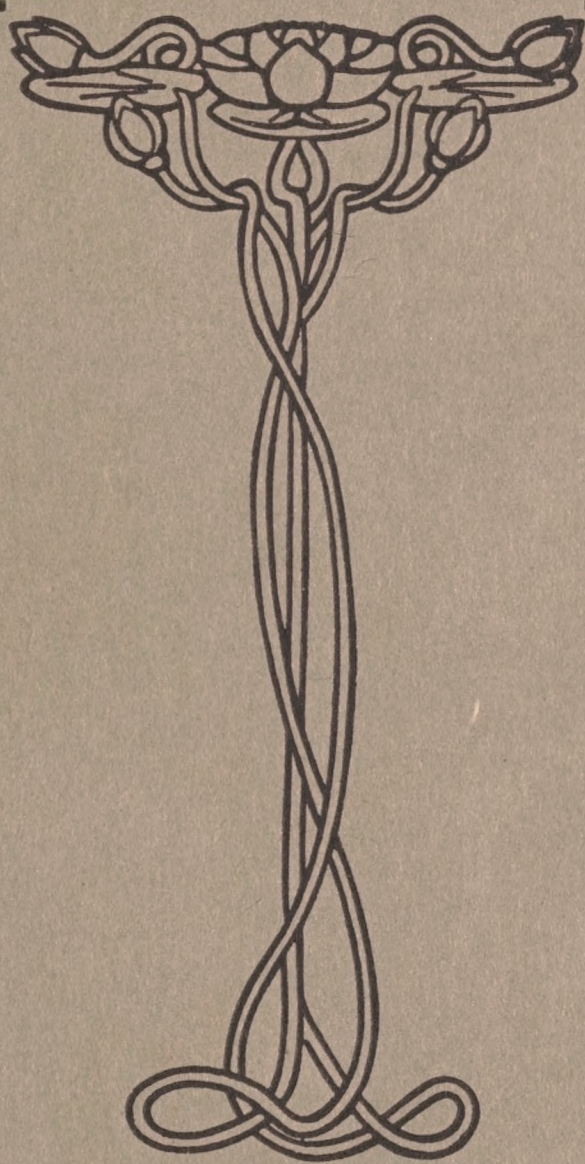
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OLD LOVE STORIES

WITH NEW VARIATIONS



LAURA ISABEL IRELAND

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OLD LOVE STORIES
WITH NEW VARIATIONS,
OR
THE REWARD OF A USEFUL,
UNSELFISH LIFE.

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By
LAURA ISABEL IRELAND

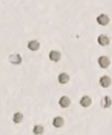
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INTRODUCTION.

From my earliest recollection I had very high ideals, wonderful visions and great imaginations for the future, accompanied with exalted ideas as to what one must achieve in order to be successful, useful and happy in this present world.

I was inspired by the most spiritually-minded writers of the Bible, and I besought Divine Wisdom to place in my hands the best books that would teach me the highest truths.

I believed every one had latent talent, which if cultivated and used would make him successful, unselfish and useful in all lines of work. I prayed earnestly to God to reveal to me my talent and to place me where I could serve Him best and do the greatest amount of good to the greatest number of people.

One evening, while sitting in a public hall, waiting for a lecture to begin, a strange lady came in and took the seat nearest to me. She spoke to me, and we began discussing first one subject, then another. Finally she asked me if I wrote very much. I answered, No, that I had never written much except a few short poems. She then inquired if I would like to know what my greatest talent is. I replied that I certainly would and that I had been beseeching Divine Wisdom in its own wise way to reveal my talent to me and to help me use it for the good of my fellow beings.

She said, "Your greatest gift is writing. Some day you will take up your pen and write."

Following this, I tried to write at several different

times, but my most diligent efforts met with no success.

One morning, however, just before awakening, I had a very vivid dream. I dreamed that a lady appeared to me—a very advanced soul—and she said to me:

“I have come to assign people to their rightful place in the path of life. You will begin your work by writing a book. The title of this book will be, ‘Old Love Stories, with New Variations, or, The Reward of a Useful, Unselfish Life.’

“You will place your book before the minds of the people, especially young men and young women, to teach them the higher relations of love between men and women as it will exist between the sexes in the New Dispensation that will soon be ushered in.

“Whoever reads and studies this book, acquires its true, spiritual meaning and makes its teachings practical in everyday life, will find a solution for every problem and be able to triumph over all difficulties. Then this book will have accomplished its mission, and its author will be rewarded by the same Spirit of Inspiration that guided its compilation.”

So it was that as my dream or vision faded, the words of this book began coming into my mind spontaneously and without effort. No longer was there a labored attempt to write, but instead there was the joyous expression of thoughts that flowed from my pen freely and fully, through no volition of my own, but a message from the great Infinite, sent to all those who long for happiness and perhaps wonder why they do not find it. To all such I say, Read, study, acquire and benefit by this message to you!

LAURA ISABEL IRELAND
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OLD LOVE STORIES, WITH NEW VARIATIONS, OR THE REWARD OF A USEFUL, UNSELFISH LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

Lorane's School Days

Lorane Mayhan was left an orphan at the age of six, without any means of support whatever. She had no relatives that she knew of, and but very few friends. However, one kind family, in good financial circumstances, offered her a home, where she made herself useful as the little nurse of their five months' old baby.

Lorane had never had a good home. She had gone to kindergarten but a few days and had received very little training. She was a very pretty little girl, with large bright, blue eyes, and light golden-brown ringlets covering a well proportioned and good-shaped head. Her features were even and round, with a very soft, rosy complexion, and she possessed all the good qualities that were necessary to develop into a beautiful, bright and intelligent woman.

Lorane was very happy in her new home, always singing like a lark and ready to assist with any kind of work. She soon became very much attached to the children of the family, who in turn were extremely fond of her, and with her cheerful, happy disposition it was not long until she became a favorite with the entire Allen family.

They sent her to school with the rest of the children. She was very studious, brought home the best reports, and advanced so rapidly, from one grade to another, that all the teachers marveled at her unusual brightness.

She loved to help the children in their little problems and was willing to give instructions in all lines of study.

As she grew older they all came to rely on her sweet, unerring judgment more and more, and Mr. Allen often asked her advice as to what course to pursue in his business transactions, and when he would listen to her ideas and suggestions he would be successful far beyond his own expectations.

Lorane graduated from the grammar school at the age of 14. She appreciated and loved her home and family, but she had a deep desire to earn her own living. She frequently discussed this matter with the Allens, expressing her own ideas as to what line of work she would like to take up and asking their advice.

Her own ideas, however, were so much in advance of theirs and possessed so much merit that they refrained from advising her beyond counseling her that she should go on with her studies until she had finished high school.

While Lorane thanked them gratefully for their interest and kind counsel, she decided in her own mind that she should enter into some occupation without further delay.

It was nearing Christmas time, and the downtown stores were advertising for help in all lines of work. Lorane applied for work in one of the large drygoods stores and was given a position at one of the notion counters. She did everything so neatly and nicely, and was so pleasant and polite to every one she came

in contact with that the manager very quickly saw she was capable of holding a better position and transferred her to another department where she received higher wages. For thus she was very thankful and from her unselfish heart resolved to please her employer as well as her customers.

In the same manner she made good everywhere she was placed until she soon ranked as the best saleswoman in the house. Her salary advanced with her preferment, and it was not long before she was not only paying all her living expenses but was able to fulfill her cherished ambition to take lessons in music, for Lorane was gifted with natural musical talent and the possessor of an unusually fine mezzo soprano voice, and the deepest desire of her heart was that she might become a great singer. To be sure, her employment left her but little time to devote to her music, but she gave every spare moment to its study and practice in order to realize the fulfillment of her beloved ideals.

This, of course, meant rapid and sure progress, until her longing eyes seemed to see the fulfillment of her life-dream coming ever nearer and nearer, while her days grew fuller and sweeter with the satisfaction that work faithfully done ever yields.

CHAPTER II.

Lorane's Appearance in Europe as a Red Cross Nurse.

When war was declared against Germany Lorane Mayhan was among the first to offer her services. She loved to do good to suffering humanity, and she deemed it her duty, as well, to do all she could wherever most needed.

She entered the Red Cross training school and in due time received a first-class certificate as a practical Red Cross nurse. She made all necessary arrangements required for the voyage and started with the first of those who left positions, home and friends to go to the battle fields in France.

The nurses found plenty of work on the way over. There were the sick to be administered to, sad hearts to be comforted and the lonely to be cheered and strengthened.

Lorane's first patient was a Captain, who never crossed the ocean without suffering terrible seasickness. This time he had an unusually bad attack, and the attending physician said that it would require the best of care and nursing to bring him through. Lorane, with a brave and courageous heart, resolved to do her best.

"I can and I will!" was Lorane's motto, whatever the work she entered into. She was gifted with great spiritual intuition and had advanced ideas, far above the ordinary, and was always kind and cheerful and happy when using her God-given talent so graciously

given her, for all human needs wherever and whenever called to serve without any selfish motives whatever.

She could not always conscientiously follow the doctor's advice, but would follow the promptings of her own better judgment. All of the physicians were amazed and astonished at the amazingly rapid recovery made by her patient who was so very low when she undertook his care and questioned her closely as to the methods she had employed.

With simple candor she told them that she had no method, but acted on the first good impression that came to her mind.

"I always look on the bright side of all problems," she assured them, "and ask Divine Love to guide me to the right action. I never entertain any dark, sad or evil forebodings, nor allow my mind to harbor suggestions of any worrying nature whatever. I find that cheerfulness and good, loving, kind thoughts, words and acts for every one are the secrets of success in all lines of work."

Lorane gave concerts and sang patriotic songs in all parts of the ship. Her lovable ways soon made her a favorite with officers, crew and passengers. The captain called on her to lend aid in various plans, and more than once the crew recognized her spiritual authority in emergencies.

At one time, when a severe storm was approaching, the captain and all the crew were very busy making all arrangements for the safety of those on board. Most of the passengers were badly frightened, some of them screaming and running wildly to and fro. Lorane, with her calm, peaceful presence of mind, mounted some high structure that had just been put in place

to keep the waves off of the deck, where, with one hand clinging to the ropes and the other waving Old Glory, she sang in a loud, clear voice, "The Star Spangled Banner," with new variations all of her own arrangement. Her smiling face and golden hair floating out from her uncovered head made her appear a veritable angel of light and a vision of promise to all who saw her.

Soon the storm calmed and the passengers became quiet and peaceful, their sorrows changed to joy, their fright to composure and cheerfulness. So it was that Lorane, with first thought for others, ever met all threat of danger and won the love and confidence of all on board.

At the end of the voyage, as Lorane was bidding her friends good bye, the Captain of the ship came to her, with tears in his large brown eyes, expressing his deep regret at their parting. He also complimented her on her good singing and her cheerful willingness to help in all lines of work and at all times of emergencies, and declared that he had never had a more pleasant trip across the ocean in all his experience.

Lorane, in the hospital in France had many varied experiences. In her nursing of the soldiers, she won the love and deep appreciation of all to whom she ministered. She was given the name of the Ministering Angel, and all expressed their feelings of peace and quietness when under her calm influence.

After Lorane had been in the hospital several months and encountered so much of the horrors that were to be met there, her health began to fail. She therefore began to think seriously of returning to her native country. She longed to see her old friends and again to resume the work that is required to make one a

great singer. The stage from early childhood had had a great fascination for her, and she felt that her talent should be expressed there.

She had not decided just when she would start for home, so kept right along with her duties in the hospital. She felt that just at the time she was needed awhile longer for some special work, and although the outlines of what that special mission might be were not clear to her yet, she was willing to be patient and await future developments.

One morning, after one of the hardest drives, the ambulance brought to the hospital a young officer, who was found lying on the ground in an unconscious state, his face and eyes badly burned with the poisonous gas. His condition was very critical, and the physicians knew that the most skillful care and nursing would be required to save his life. They called for the best nurses to assist them in bandaging and dressing his wounds, and after they had finished their work they bade the nurses good bye, thanking them for their bravery and cheerfulness which they had manifested throughout the trying ordeal of the operation.

They consigned the wounded man to the especial care of Lorane, who had won the honor of being considered the best nurse in the hospital. She sat silently by his side, with a prayer in her soul for his recovery. In a few minutes she noticed symptoms of returning consciousness.

She took his hand and gently asked him if he was comfortable. Moving his head a little, he replied, "Yes, thank God, I am."

After he became entirely conscious and was able to bear it, Lorane thought best to tell him all about how and why he came to be in the hospital. He listened

intently, then thanked her and asked wistfully if she would not help him to forget it all.

"With all my heart I will," she answered him tenderly.

And then Lorane prayed as she never had before, with her soul filled with faithfulness to God, imploring that the wounded man should have erased from his consciousness all the horrible scenes of the past, his mind filled with the glory and joy of living and placed where he could be of the best use for the good of his fellow beings.

The young captain lapsed into a natural, peaceful sleep, and while sleeping had a vision. He dreamed that he was back in good old Southern California, living in a neat, beautiful home on his 50-acre ranch, which was given to him by his Uncle Tom on his twenty-first birthday.

In his vision he saw a beautiful young woman, with blue eyes, light golden wavy hair, rosy complexion and a bright, sunny, smiling face as his helpmeet.

Alzaro knew in his dream he had seen this fair maiden somewhere but his dream was of such a mystical nature, he could not remember it all on first awakening.

Lorane wondered as she sat by his side why she seemed to take more interest in this young man than she had ever done with all her other patients and so longed for his entire and complete recovery and so earnestly desired to see his face and know something of his past life. She also wondered if he was a native of the United States, or of France, England or Italy.

However she quickly dismissed this thought wandering from her mind and began to thank God for his loving kindness and mercies, knowing full well that he

would reveal to her all that he in his own wise judgment wished her to know.

As she sat silent, watching her patient, a new poem came to her mind, whose rhythm seemed gradually to fall into certain strains of music. While she was setting the words to the music, humming the softer tones her patient awoke. He asked for a drink of water, and while Lorane was preparing this he raised himself, sat upright in bed, helping himself as though nothing had happened to him.

Now, the patient had been awake a few minutes before and had been listening to Lorane's singing. The physicians had forbidden Lorane conversing with her patients, but she saw that in this case it would not hurt him to express himself a little.

He tried several times to remove the bandages from his eyes, as he desired very much to see the face of his kind and loving nurse. This, however, she would not permit him to do, thinking it better that his eyes should have time to become accustomed to the light after being so seriously injured.

They sat in this way for some time, chatting happily about music. The patient had taken his feet off the bed and was sitting up, declaring that he felt as well as he ever had in his whole life. Just at this time some of the doctors opened a side door, coming in to see about their dangerously ill patient. To their great surprise and astonishment they witnessed a scene that they could not at once persuade themselves was real. They had thought it would require several days with the best of care, before there would even be much change in his condition.

The patient on his part at once began begging them to remove the bandage from his eyes. This they would

not consent to, but told him that he was improving so nicely that he must not spoil it now by impatience; that they would be back in a short time and would then take whatever course seemed best to insure his speedy recovery.

They praised and congratulated Lorane for her wise judgment and nursing, and hoped she would remain with them to the end. "We feel your good natural healing powers and appreciate your wise, unerring judgment. You have been a great and willing helper in most all the trying and critical cases." They asked God's blessing to accompany her all through life, bidding her good-bye; they turned to remove the bandage from Alzaro's face.

Just then another physician came and called for Lorane, whom he wished to assist him in a very bad case of pneumonia that had suddenly attacked one of the nurses. She shook hands with her patient, little dreaming that this would be their last meeting for some time to come.

CHAPTER III.

Alzaro Stanton's Home in California.

Near the foothills overlooking one of the most beautiful and picturesque valleys in the glorious climate of Southern California, on a large ranch crowned with lemon, orange and walnut trees, there cozily nestles a typical California bungalow, albeit built on rather a more palatial scale than usual. A thoroughly up-to-date modern house, its twelve spacious rooms provide an appropriate setting for the residence of Stanley Stanton, retired capitalist, with his sainted wife Elizabeth, the mother of four bright and happy children.

Alzaro, the eldest, is a handsome young man, 21 years of age, with fine physique, straight, athletic figure, large brown eyes, dark and slightly curling hair and fine olive complexion. Standing 5 feet and 11 inches high and a weight of 150 pounds, he reflects credit on the training received at his college, having just graduated from one of the best educational institutions in the state of California.

Louise, a fair young maiden of 18 summers has deep blue eyes, dark golden wavy hair, a rosy complexion and a graceful and well-proportioned form. She graduated from high school at the age of 17, is naturally gifted with an unusually rich contralto voice and possesses a fairly good musical education. She has never expressed herself as to what line of work she would like to take up, but is very devoted to her parents and seems to be perfectly contented to remain home and

help her dear mother care for the two younger children, Tom, aged 9 years, and Grace, 4, and assist with the house duties.

Mr. Stanton has in his service a very refined and well educated Japanese, named Canngo Cong, who has his wife and two nice, obedient children with him. These faithful Japanese have been with the Stantons for several years. They are always ready and willing to assist the family along all lines of work when needed. They live near by on a portion of the ranch, in a neat cottage planned and built according to specifications furnished by the Japanese himself, after the style of his native home.

Mr. Stanton is very kind to his Japanese assistants and pays them well for their labor. In fact, he could not do otherwise, being a firm believer in the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, deeming every one, regardless of color or nationality, his brother in Christ.

Alzaro since graduating from college had not thought of taking up any kind of work, but was willing to assist Cong in the flower garden. He loved flowers, and admired the style and artistic methods of the Japanese in arranging everything to harmonize.

One morning he took his long pruning knife out to cut away some useless branches from the honeysuckle arbor near the front gate. It was one of those soft, balmy breezy days that stirs the heart of all nature in California. The foothills had been visited a few days previously with refreshing showers, and everywhere orchards, lawns, shade trees and shrubbery were putting forth their new dress of vernal green in response to the welcome rain, so much appreciated in spring time.

Alzaro was busy trimming the vines, whistling a patriotic air as he did so, when he caught the musical strains of a mocking bird, which had selected the top-most branch of a beautiful magnolia tree, where its golden throat was voicing praise to the All-Good in a melody so wonderful that it seemed incredible it could be produced by so small a specimen of God's handiwork.

Alzaro wondered as he listened to the last notes if this songster had a mate close by that made him seem so happy, also why it was that he had never selected any particular one more than another of his school-mates to care for, but admired all alike. He often thought of Homer Moery and his sister Louise,—how happy they were together, how gentlemanly Homer always acted in her presence, and how glad, cheerful and willing he always was to assist her in all her little troubles.

And what an expression of love, smiles and cheerfulness Louise manifested when referring Homer's good, manly and generous qualities.

While pondering all this in his heart, he heard a rustling among the leaves overhead, and looking up he saw that his little feathered friend had returned with its mate. They hopped, skipped and flitted from one bough to another, then would dive down to get something to eat or the lily pond for a drink. They busily carried bits of string to weave into a nest which they were preparing for their future home and young ones. The singer was not so industrious as its mate, but would perch itself on its chosen bough and pour out its heart in song while its mate did the work of building the nest.

To Alzaro it seemed that the bird sang sweeter and louder than before now that its mate was near. Just as

it seemed to attain its most exalted state and to sing with the sweetest inspiration, Alzaro saw a young lady walking slowly along. She had a heavy veil wrapped closely around her head, nothing but her eyes revealed. She had caught the strains of the little feathered songster, and was almost tiptoeing as she passed along, lest the noise of her footfalls would disturb it and cause it to cease its singing. She paused just opposite the magnolia tree, gazing upward to catch a glimpse of the bird.

Alzaro, whom she had not yet observed, thought that she had the most beautiful blue eyes of any woman he had ever seen,—eyes as blue as the skies above and filled with tender love as she drank in the sweet melody of the mocking bird.

She listened in breathless silence until the last notes died away, then softly clapping her hands, said, "Thank you, dear fellow songbird. I, too, love to sing. I am on my way now to practice the songs I shall sing to-night at the Orpheum for the Red Cross benefit. I trust I can give some one the same joy, hope and pleasure by my singing that you have just given me with your lovely song this afternoon. Good-bye!"

So saying she turned and hurried on her way, all unconscious of the presence of any one near by. Alzaro watched her until she reached the little station, where she took a car that carried her from his sight but not from his thoughts. When it was too late, he reproached himself bitterly that he had not availed himself of the opportunity to address her and let her know that he had been near and overheard her words to the mocking bird.

Alzaro well knew by the emotions of his own heart that they were sometime and somewhere to meet again,

and made up his mind to be patient and trust to Divine Love to arrange that time and place. He could not quite understand the new light that was filling his soul and that his young love dreams were soon to be realized.

"Is there really a soul mate ordered by Divine Wisdom for me?" he questioned his inner consciousness eagerly. "It seems to me as if the new awakening is coming,—is very close."

Alzaro kept on busily pruning the vines, not caring to have his thoughts diverted from the new light that life was manifesting to him since seeing those heavenly blue eyes. He was aroused from his pleasing reverie by the shrill whistle of his little brother Tommy, reminding him that the dinner hour was near and it was time for him to get ready.

That evening after dinner was over Alzaro went to his room and dressed himself as if going out. He then went to the music room, where Louise was practicing a new piece presented her by Homer, whom she expected to call later that they might practice together. Alzaro kissed his sister Good Night, telling her that he was going into the city to the Orpheum, as there was something special there that he wanted to hear. He promised her that he would tell her all about it the next day.

On arriving at the theater, Alzaro bought a ticket in one of the best boxes. There, seated comfortably, looking over the program, he saw by the synopsis that the first number to be presented was the rendition of an old story he had read when a mere boy.

It was the narrative of a young prince, whom his parents had forbidden to look on a beautiful girl, attaching the penalty that if he did so and was caught at it

he would lose his crown. A sweet and lovely youthful singer became infatuated with this prince, but would not allow herself to meet him, knowing what the consequences to him would be in that event. However, she would get as near to him as possible, without revealing her face, and entertain him by her glorious voice in song. She always concealed herself where he could not see her, but could hear her sing.

This his parents did not object to,—in fact they rather approved of it, as they thought it a good idea just to let him listen but not to look on her face.

Alzaro felt as he thought the prince must have done when he heard the sweet notes of the singer, but could not see her beautiful face illumined by those deep blue eyes again. He knew intuitively that it was the same voice that he had heard speak this same afternoon, as his heart responded to the same emotions of love that had swept over it a few hours before.

He felt sorry for the rich young prince who knew he could never realize the hope of his young love dreams, nor enjoy the company of the sweet singer who so mysteriously had won the affections of his young tender heart.

Alzaro left the theater that night, not with disappointment, but with a firm determination to win. He well knew that he must cultivate patience and courage before he could hope to win the heart of any true and trustworthy woman, and he was willing to undergo such training if it was necessary to prepare him for the wise and loving companion he desired.

He implored Divine Wisdom to teach him to act wisely and help him to solve every problem that came to him. Alzaro had been taught from earliest childhood to trust the all-providing law of an all-good

Father, and now, with a prayer to God and full confidence in his all-loving care, he resolved to make the best of whatever came. He knew that it was the law of God that our own would come to us if we wait patiently on the Lord and expect nothing but the best, for, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," and so will he be.

When the war was first declared and soldiers were called for, Alzaro was among the first to enlist. He did not believe that the right path to freedom was through the shedding of men's blood, but he saw the awful condition in which the nations of the world were involved and knew that man's every effort was therefore necessary. He was perfectly willing to go wherever sent and to serve at whatever work he should be given to do.

Several of Alzaro's college friends enlisted and all left for the battlefields in France the same time. Louise proposed to her mother that before they left for Europe they should give Alzaro and his friends one of his favorite dinners.

Mrs. Stanton decided, therefore, on a good old-fashioned chicken-pie dinner, the kind she knew that Alzaro liked the most, accompanied with all the other good things that go to make up a chicken dinner. She knew from long experience what would appeal to the appetite of college boys, and spared no time or expense to prepare the most tempting relishes she or Louise could concoct.

The dinner was arranged for the day before the boys were to start to Camp Lewis, where they were to receive their preliminary training before being sent abroad to actual warfare over the seas. The dinner

table was exquisitely decorated with the loveliest roses and ferns the flower garden produced, selected and arranged by Louise, whose artistic taste in arranging flowers and harmonizing colors was absolutely perfect.

The boys had been engaged all afternoon in an exciting game of baseball and therefore had appetites sharpened to the utmost capacity. After the game, they had all gone to their various homes, where they attired themselves in their evening suits, and returning gathered in the elegantly furnished drawing room, still jubilant over their victory in the game of the afternoon.

Mrs. Stanton announced dinner, and the boys were ready to do justice to her well-prepared meal. Mr. Stanton invited the boys to walk in, Alzaro bringing up the rear. As they entered the dining room they were greeted by old patriotic airs, a medley, beginning with, "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys Are Marching!" which added greatly to their merriment. They all stood around the table silently, listening to the music, the family looking at each other in smiling amusement.

Finally Mr. Stanton seized a large silver spoon from the table, and using it for a baton beckoned all to join in singing. This was one of Tom's original ideas, for, being anxious to help entertain Alzaro's old friends he had brought in his own Victrola from the domestic animal zoo, where he had been giving the animals a Red Cross concert. He placed the instrument behind the folds of Old Glory, whose revered stars and stripes had been beautifully draped and decorated by Louise especially for this occasion.

Mrs. Stanton then seated them all in their designated places, the young men all on one side of the table, the children on the other, with Mr. Stanton at the head

of the table ready to do the honors, Mrs. Stanton opposite, to serve hot drinks to those who wished them. The faithful Japanese and his wife were standing near the door into the kitchen, in readiness to assist whenever needed.

Mr. Stanton, a man of medium size, well-groomed and young looking for his age, was of a very generous-hearted, jovial nature and had a good cheering word for all with whom he came in contact. Louise sat next to her father, to help serve the vegetables. She wore a pale blue chiffon, combined with a darker shade of velvet. Around her neck was a handsome diamond and pearl necklace, one of her graduating presents from the family, while a small bunch of delicate pink Cecil Brunner roses at her waist and two or three buds against a back ground of green leaves nestling in her rich golden brown hair added the last touch of perfection to her beautiful costume.

Mrs. Stanton was gowned in a rich cream French satin, with black velvet trimming. She wore no ornaments except a magnificent ruby, pearl and diamond brooch, presented to her by her husband on their wedding day.

They all chatted merrily, dwelling only on the pleasant things of life and enjoying Mr. Stanton's jokes. The youths ate their dinner with much zest and thankful hearts and many expressions of praise and appreciation to Mrs. Stanton and Louise for the good dinner and faultless service, especially some new and tasteful salad dishes. They extravagantly complimented Louise on her good taste in decorating, and declared that everything was arranged to the Queen's taste!

After dinner, the boys begged Louise to sing some

of her new songs to them, which she consented to do with the greatest pleasure. She was anxious that they should hear the lovely silver tones of her new Baby Grand piano, a recent gift from her Uncle Tom in New York. Nor was she disappointed in their outspoken admiration, and very willingly she continued entertaining the party, rendering for them some of the latest and most difficult operatic selections, ably assisted by Homer Moery, who was gifted with a very fine lyric tenor voice.

At a later hour than the boys had anticipated remaining they arose to take their departure, with many thanks to the entire family for having given them the most enjoyable occasion of their whole life.

Homer Moery lingered in the drawing room with the family after the others had gone, as he wished to make a few arrangements for their journey the next day, since they were all to leave for Camp Lewis the following morning.

Homer had been a classmate of Louise all through the grammar school and up to their graduating day. He was a favorite with all the family and one of Alzaro's best friends, whose boon companion he had been throughout their college days, working along the same lines and graduating the same day.

Louise and Homer had become very much attached to each other since his return from college. His fine tenor voice, so often accompanying her in her music, had found a home in her heart and inspired her with a new outlook for the future.

Homer shook hands with Mr. and Mrs. Stanton and Alzaro and turned to bid Louise good night. A few minutes previously she had slipped from the room and was just re-entering the door with two neatly wrapped

packages, one for Homer and the other for her brother, which she made them promise they would not open until they had reached Camp Lewis.

She had made each of them a comfort bag, handsomely embroidered. Homer's was decorated with a small bunch of his favorite Cecil Bruner rosebuds, encircled with a dainty wreath of pale blue forget-me-nots. The bags were filled with the most useful and costly articles Louise could purchase. There was also a little book for each, with the best affirmations she could find for each day's needs. Alzaro's bag was embroidered with his favorite flower—Caroline Testout rosebuds.

The boys expressed their gratitude for the gifts with grateful hearts, Alzaro remarking that he was beginning to be hungry for the contents of his already!

Homer, with his package in one hand and hat in another, and another good night, bowed himself away from the family, out of the house into the moonlight. And as he walked along by the sweetly scented flower beds he wondered why the flowers seemed more fragrant than usual, why the stars shone more brilliantly and the moon's pale sphere was nearer and softer than he had ever noticed before. He also reflected in vague surprise that Louise's good influence and smiling face never seemed to leave his consciousness. All these things he pondered over as he walked slowly home that night, with an air of lightness, and his heart filled with a tender joy that he had never experienced before.

The next morning, the day of their departure, the boys all met at Alzaro's home, the family having arranged to accompany them to the station to see them off.

The hour had arrived for their departure. Canngo

Cong, the Japanese, brought the big family touring car from the garage, which was soon packed to its utmost capacity, and all were merry and happy as a lot of school children on a picnic day.

They arrived at the station just in time to see their train come in. The boys bade everyone a hurried good bye, seized their baggage, stepped on the train and rushed to the rear end of the last coach. As the train pulled out they waved their flags, singing "The Star Spangled Banner," until a turn in the road took them out of sight and their voices out of hearing.

Nor did the young men forget these kind friends who had entertained them so royally ere they left home. They all wrote the Stantons several times on their way to Camp Lewis, and each mail brought a card or letter as a reminder of their love and friendship.

CHAPTER IV.

**Louise Stanton's Good Work in the Church
and Among the Sick in Her Own
Neighborhood.**

After the boys had been gone but a few days Louise experienced such a unusual feeling of loneliness that she attributed it to a useless, selfish life. There was very little at home to occupy her. The children were not much care,—in fact Tom took all the care of Gracie and the Japanese assistants did all the hard, laborious work.

Louise was tired of fancy work and longed to be out doing something for suffering humanity and working in the service of her fellow beings. She began to study over what she might do to the best advantage, and a host of opportunities presented themselves to her mind in a few minutes. The first she thought of was a poor widow, whose oldest son had been drafted and who was then in a training camp and who was the only support of his mother and three little children.

Louise directed Cong to bring her electric car to the door, calling Tom and Gracie and asking them if they would like to take a little ride.

"Certainly, we will be delighted," answered Tom; "just wait a few minutes until we can corral our turkeys. Congo say they are eating all the vegetables up."

Tom and Gracie, with the help of Congo, were driving them through the gateway, when one of the large turkeys caught its foot in a tangled wire and in its

effort to free itself it broke one of its legs. The Jap said it must be killed immediately. Louise then told him to kill and dress it, as she would like to take some of it to a poor lady a short distance away, whose only support had been drafted for the war.

While Congo was preparing the turkey, Louise and her mother gathered up quite a bundle of good clothing, and some dried and canned goods of various kinds.

Louise and the two children then started on Louise's first charity work for the poor.

On arriving at this poor neighbor's home they found her sick in bed, with but very little provisions in the house. Her little 7-year old daughter was her only nurse, cook and housekeeper, and also had the care of her two little brothers, aged three and five years.

Louise and her little brother and sister spent a couple of hours here. Tom and Gracie romped and played with the children while Louise put the turkey on to cook when she first entered the house as she saw that the sick woman was very much in need of nourishing food. Before she left she had her patient drink some of the broth, which revived and strengthened her so that she was able to sit up and enjoy the many other useful things which Louise had brought her.

As Louise was preparing to take her leave, Mrs. King clung to her hands, and while tears of joy and thankfulness streamed down her face she thanked God for sending Louise to her at the time of her greatest need. She also thanked Louise most fervently and begged her to come again in a few days, which Louise promised to do. She also told Mrs. King that when she needed anything it would not only be a pleasure to her but to her mother and all the family as well to furnish it.

Louise and the children called at several other

places where assistance was greatly needed, promising to come the next day with the things that were most essential for relief.

Tom and Gracie never seemed to tire talking of the good work in which they were engaged.

Louise many, many times, as often as it was convenient, took the little Sunday school children out on hikes and picnics in Mr. Stanton's large auto-truck, and sometimes she would drive them to a street car line, where she would have a car chartered; but either way the delighted children always said they had a "high, swell time."

She observed that the little church which Gracie and Tom attended needed a larger pulpit and a larger rostrum for the choir, and brought the subject up before her parents, who did a great deal of charitable church work. They fell in with her ideas and plans, as they were very much pleased to see her take so much interest in the church and Sunday school work, as well as giving so much attention to the poor and needy of the neighborhood.

Louise further notified the trustees of her ideas as to what seemed to be needed in church improvements. They did not approve, however, as the church was so much in debt that they thought it would be unwise to involve it in deeper indebtedness, stating that otherwise they would be much pleased to have the needed addition.

"Mr. Green," Louise replied, "you would accept a donation for the improvement, would you not? I have a party in mind who has promised to furnish the money that will be required to meet all expenses for the addition and whatever other improvements we might choose to make. Now, with your consent, I will order

all the materials that will be required, we will engage all necessary help, and begin at once."

"Oh, surely, surely!" exclaimed Mr. Green, the other trustee heartily concurring with him; "nothing would be more appreciated by the members of the congregation than to see your plans carried out. And on our part we will see to it that a very neat, pretty and attractive addition is erected, which will give grace to the little chapel beyond our present vision."

Mr. and Mrs. Stanton gave large donations. They did not believe in letting the left hand know what the right hand was doing. In other words, they did not like to boast of their charity work, but preferred to keep it between themselves and their God.

A few weeks of steady, busy working on the part of all the members of the church found the little chapel with its attractive addition and a new coat of paint, looking fresh and clean, both outside and within. All of this was mostly planned by Louise's artistic designs and reflected great credit on her good taste and arrangement of harmonious coloring.

The trustees found that after paying all bills for the new addition they had more than enough remaining to pay off the entire indebtedness of the church, for which they were extremely thankful. The church grew in numbers and many souls were added to its membership, while attendance at the Sunday school greatly increased, the house being filled to overflowing at every service.

Of course, Louise was loved and admired, and her wonderful musical talent was much appreciated by all. In addition to her other aid for the church, she presented them with her beautiful upright mahogany piano which her father had given her for her fifth birthday

present. She had never used it since receiving her elegant Baby Grand piano from her Uncle Tom on her eighteenth birthday. She therefore had the old upright tuned and repaired, when its tones proved as sweet and musical as at the time it first came into her own home.

Louise was a bright light in her community, and made herself very useful in all lines of work. She joined the Red Cross organization, where her executive ability was soon recognized. She made all the arrangements for benefit concerts, singing solos and playing the piano on all occasions where needed in her own neighborhood.

Louise learned by experience that a useful, unselfish life is the secret of a happy, prosperous, successful life.

To those who are seeking a message,
You can a messenger be,
By sending kind thoughts to the lonely,
On the land or upon the deep sea.

The smiles from our hearts always gladden
The friends that we meet on our way,

And the souls that more light are beseeching
We can help up the rough, rugged way.

By kind words that are spoken sincerely
We can change the sad thoughts of our friends,
Lift them up out of gloom, dark and dreary,
To a joy that for them never ends.

(See version on page 85.)

CHAPTER V.

Alzaro and Homer Return from Europe.

Homer Moery while on the field of action in France fell a victim to bursting shells. In writing home later he did not mention anything about his accident either to Louise or his father and mother. He did not want to worry them or keep them in unnecessary suspense as to the state of his health, which he knew would be the result if he should give them the least hint about his wound.

He was kept in the hospital several weeks. There were two or three severe scars on his left cheek and one on his right arm. The flesh was slow in healing, and Homer was afraid that there would be permanent, ugly scars left after he had fully recovered. However he received the best of care and treatment, and the physicians finally assured him that there would remain no marks of his wounds that could be noticed without the closest observation.

He had written bright, cheerful letters throughout all, saying that he was doing well, that he believed the war soon would be over and all the boys would be coming back to America again. He told them that he longed to be at home again as all of them had had about as much of the war as they really enjoyed and hoped and prayed for the day when peace would be declared.

Alzaro also suffered severely from wounds he received, but especially from poisonous gas, being con-

fined to the hospital sometime. It was therefore with much joy that he and Homer hailed the news of the signing of the armistice. They were among the first to receive orders to return to the United States, and were eager to board the ship and be on their way sailing again to their own country.

Alzaro had entirely recovered from his accident, but Homer was slow in his improvement, although he was gaining strength every day and hoped that by the time they had reached the end of their homeward journey he would be entirely well. The thought of again seeing Louise, his father and mother and all the old friends braced him up as nothing else could have done.

On the way home they encountered two very severe storms at sea. Some of the crew lost their lives in trying to save imperiled passengers, but beyond this no serious casualties occurred, and after the havoc and great loss of lives that occurred on the battle front in France these accidents did not seem so terrible as they once would have done.

The returning heroes, whose minds were shocked and saddened by the horrors of the warfare through which they had passed, all pledged themselves not to think or speak of what had been undergone and seen any more than was inevitable. We all find that by changing the tenor of a gloomy conversation we soon forget the unpleasant side of life and through our own brighter outlook are thereby enabled to help others out of their troubles and difficulties.

One morning the mail brought Louise a letter, stating that Alzaro and Homer would reach New York the last of December or the first of the year. It explained how Alzaro and Homer had been released from

service, as Alzaro's eyes were still feeling the effects of the poison gas, while Homer's health was such that the attending physicians had after a consultation decided that the two boys must be immediately discharged from the army and allowed to return to America to recuperate.

So it was that they soon after gratefully stepped again on their native soil, feeling that they had faithfully borne their part while war's terrors called for their service and were now entitled to the joys of a well-earned rest.

Homer's anticipations of completely restored health by the time they reached the United States were not realized, as he found that his shattered nerves would not seem to recuperate. After he reached home, despite all that could be done for him, his health still remained badly impaired. For a few weeks all hoped for a change for the better, until one night he was suddenly taken very ill with pneumonia. The best doctors and nurses were summoned. Louise also immediately offered her good services.

He continued to grow worse, however, until the third day he lapsed into a state of unconsciousness. Louise, with her faithfulness and never-ceasing prayers to God for his recovery, remained by his side throughout the night.

In the morning, after two hours of natural sleep, just at the break of dawn, he aroused from his sleep, his fever having all dispersed and his pulse being normal.

With a calm, peaceful countenance, he opened his eyes and looked up at Louise, saying, "Thank God, darling one, you have saved my life." They talked for sometime in their usual manner, neither caring for any-

thing but just to be with each other and cheer and make each other happy.

It was truly a happy time. The sun had risen and its bright cheerful rays were streaming into the room, filling it with healthful, invigorating ozone. The little birds outside were pouring out their hearts in songs of glad jubilee, rendering praise to the Giver of All-Good.

Louise felt that God had entirely healed her lover in answer to her prayers. She rose from her chair by his bedside and told him that she was going out to prepare his breakfast.

“You can get up and dress yourself,” she said, “and come out to the breakfast room. We will have a good breakfast together, and in a very short time.”

She knew very well what would please his appetite and that he was ready for a good warm meal. Homer in a short time came bounding out, singing and happy, gay and free as a schoolboy. He and Louise ate their breakfast with hearts filled with gratitude to God for his loving kindness and tender mercies.

Homer partook freely of the daintily prepared repast, when just as they were about through the doctor came through, and stopped in the door, as surprised as if he beheld one risen from the dead. Homer rose, offered his hand, and smilingly said: “Don’t this look natural?”

He turned to Louise, and taking both of her hands in his, thanked her again and again for her good work.

“God has given you a wonderful gift of healing,” he assured her; “and it is my earnest hope that you will use it for the benefit of suffering humanity, whenever opportunity presents itself.”

Mr. and Mrs. Moery came in just in time to witness the most enjoyable scene that they had ever experi-

enced. Here was their only son, whom all the physicians had but a few short hours ago given up to die, alive and well, and to all appearance manifesting perfect health and looking as though he had never had a moment's illness in all his life.

Louise telephoned to her parents right away of Homer's recovery. They also were overjoyed and told her to have Homer and his parents come over to their place and spend the day with them, and all would eat and drink together to Homer's good health.

All at the Moery's were delighted with the idea and as soon as breakfast was finished they jumped into Louise's electric car, and soon both families were rejoicing together over the great change that had come to Homer.

Homer at once on his recovery from his sickness began the construction of a new house for them, taking the entire supervision of its building, and preparing the grounds. He had shade trees, shrubbery and all kinds of fruit trees planted and soon everything was in fine growing condition.

But Louise and Homer did not confine their efforts to working for their own happiness. They sang in all benefit concerts, wherever called on. Homer also loved to assist Louise in her charitable work, and went with her on many of her visits to the poor widows and orphans, whose husbands, fathers or sons had been taken from them in various ways. They provided all these with the necessities of everyday life, and assisted in procuring employment for all the needy ones who were able to work, and also in many, many ways helped the returning soldier boys to find suitable and remunerative occupations.

CHAPTER VI.

Lorane's Return to U. S. A.

Lorane's hospital experiences in France were many and varied. Although the harrowing scenes were telling on her, mentally and physically, she never protested or ceased her faithful ministrations, and faithfully obeyed orders, until she was finally awakened to the fact that her health was rapidly failing under the strain.

She decided at once therefore to resign from her work and return to the United States. She and other nurses who were homeward bound made their arrangements to start on the next boat that sailed for New York.

When they were a few days out at sea, Lorane, in accordance with her usual custom, was on deck to watch the beautiful sunrise. It was one of those peaceful, quiet mornings, the heavens all aglow with the splendor of the eastern sky, where the rising sun was doing its best to send its illumination all over the world.

Lorane suddenly noticed a rather sad-looking elderly couple, standing with their backs to the sun that was just making its appearance above the placid rippling waters of old ocean. To Lorane everything seemed to be dancing in a jubilee of thanksgiving and praise to the Giver of All-Good for his unspeakable goodness and his gifts to men. But the old couple's faces expressed deep sorrow and trouble.

Lorane longed to cheer them and thought by speak-

ing to them she might divert their minds from their sadness. She advanced slowly toward them and smilingly offered her hands to each one of them.

"Good morning, friends," she greeted them. "I see that you are traveling back to America."

They both caught her extended hands, holding them in a fervent clasp, while smiles lit their saddened countenances. Almost in the same breath they both exclaimed:

"How very much like our own dear Anna May!"

They then related their sad story, how their only daughter and two sons had passed away a few months previously. Anna May, the daughter, was a Red Cross nurse, and had died very suddenly from gas poison, while their sons had fallen victims to pneumonia.

Lorane, who had been watching the sunrise, with a desire to draw their minds out of the darkness of grief, drew their attention to the beautiful rays of the rising luminary and soon all were chatting together very cheerfully. The sad hearts of the elderly couple found great comfort in Lorane's company. She would read to them from some good inspiring book or sing to them cheerful and beautiful songs.

She nursed Mrs. Hayward through quite a sudden attack of lung trouble, and Mr. Hayward she brought out of a severe spell of seasickness. They began to look to her to help them through all their difficulties, which she was willing and glad to do for them. They recompensed her well for her kind and faithful attendance, for which she was very grateful.

Mr. and Mrs. Hayward had no near relatives. They possessed a good income and owned a fine residence, magnificently furnished and surrounded with every-

thing that heart could wish, situated in the suburbs of New York City.

On the termination of their sea voyage, they insisted that Lorane should accompany them home and spend at least a few months with them. Lorane had talked much to them about the beautiful climate of California and praised it so highly that her friends began to think that a trip there and the change of climate might be very beneficial to them. They therefore promised her that if she would come and stay with them they would pay her beloved state a visit.

Lorane decided very quickly to accept their kind invitation, and resolved that she would do all in her power to assist them in arranging matters so that they could make a long stay in California.

This delighted the Haywards, who after making Lorane's acquaintance had found the voyage quite enjoyable, and who felt that with her near them life might still prove worth living.

CHAPTER VII.

Lorane and Her New Friends Arrive in New York.

On arriving in New York City, Mr. Hayward engaged rooms in a very fashionable downtown hotel, where he would be near his business office and his wife and Lorane close to the various places of amusement.

Mrs. Hayward and Lorane enjoyed themselves during the day visiting many interesting places of amusement and historical spots. In the evenings Mr. Hayward would take them out to different musical entertainments, and Lorane's soul was filled, and thrilled with new inspiration as she sat listening to the strains of fine orchestras and the great singers, admiring the grand scenes depicted on the stage and wondering if her own dreams of appearing in such surroundings would ever be realized.

So many thoughts filled her mind, so many new ideas came to her in her absorbed enjoyment of these wonderful musical treats that her life seemed filled to the brim. Still, her thoughts often turned to the battle-fields of France, and especially dwelt upon the welfare of her last most interesting patient. She knew that he had recovered and was all right and had returned to duty, although she had not met him since so suddenly summoned from his side when his head and face were still bandaged. She had learned from one of the other nurses who assisted in caring for him that he was a native of her own state of California.

This gave her great joy, for in her heart of hearts there dwelt the hope of once again meeting him.

The Haywards spent a couple of weeks in New York City, then Mr. Hayward took them to their own country home.

Lorane had enjoyed every minute of her stay in the city. She had made the acquaintance while there of several prominent solo singers, one of them the possessor of a very fine tenor voice. He heard her sing some of her own compositions and at once fell very much in love with her. He offered her every inducement he could think of to join the company in which he had a leading part. He saw that she had great talent and that her wonderful voice would at once obtain recognition, besides she would have the opportunity to cultivate her talent in all lines of music.

But Lorane loved her freedom and did not care to sign any contract that would interfere with her own ideas, besides she preferred traveling with her new friends. She desired also to see their country home, Westol.

Mr. Hayward drove them out in his powerful Cadillac. They made the ride very interesting for Lorane, giving her as they went along bits of interesting history of some of the large and handsome mansions along the route.

It was the last of December, and Lorane noticed the deadness of the lawns and shrubbery around the magnificent residences, contrasting it with the flowers, shrubbery and vernal lawns of her own beloved California.

When the Haywards came in sight of their own home, they did not tell Lorane whose place it was, waiting to hear what she thought of it. She was ex-

pressing her admiration in the most extravagant terms imaginable, when "Westol" in golden letters against a grey background caught her eye. She was amazed beyond expression as she gazed on the beauty and grandeur before her. The house was an imposing Swiss chalet, with terra cotta roof, grey sides, with darker grey trimmings. It was surrounded at the back and either side with tall, slender silver poplar trees.

Mr. Hayward stopped the car and let her have a better view, then they passed along the winding driveway and through the porte cochere to the side entrance, where they were met by their faithful retinue of servants.

Mrs. Hayward had telephoned her old housekeeper that they would be home at a certain hour, and would surprise them all with a young lady friend, whom she hoped they would all come to love as much as she and her husband did, since she was so much like their own dear daughter, Anna May.

Mr. and Mrs. Hayward did all in their power to make Lorane's stay with them a very pleasant one. They had been home but a few days when Lorane noticed a portrait hanging on the wall as being extremely like one she had in her own possession and which had belonged to her mother, being an old-fashioned tintype of her.

She very naturally inquired as to the origin of the portrait, and Mrs. Hayward told her, very confidentially, the whole history of her only sister. She told Lorane that she very seldom talked to any one on the subject, but felt perfectly free to relate the entire truth to Lorane, who sat and listened with great astonishment but said nothing. She seemed to be seized with sadness, mingled with joy such as she had never ex-

perienced before. Could it be that a great mystery was about to be revealed? She was almost persuaded to think so.

Mrs. Hayward noticed the serious expression that had come over Lorane's countenance. It was very unusual for Lorane to appear so sober, so much so that Mrs. Hayward asked her if she was feeling unwell.

"Oh, no," she answered, "I am perfectly well. I am just deeply interested; that's all."

Mrs. Hayward resumed her narrative of how her sister had left home when very young, and joined a grand opera company. She possessed unusual natural musical talent and ever since early childhood had had a craze for the stage. She had therefore left home at a very early age and gone to New York, where she was soon admitted as a singer in one of the best opera companies.

She never came back home and wrote but seldom at first and soon ceased writing altogether as she became absorbed in her profession.

"Several years after she left home," continued Mrs. Hayward, "we heard through a traveling company passing through our home town that my sister, Anna May Bowman, had married a great tenor singer, but we never learned his real name. We never allowed ourselves to feel sad or to worry about her, however, and gradually became reconciled. We knew she was touring the world, engaged in the pursuit of her chosen profession and living her own life."

Lorane listened intently to the story to the end, occasionally asking a few questions. She then thanked Mrs. Hayward. She then arose and smilingly excusing herself went to her own room. Opening her trunk, she took out a package that she had very carefully

packed and placed there before she went to Europe. She had never opened it since packing it away, and at the same time she did not suppose she ever would. She took the package, and going to Mrs. Hayward sat down in front of her and began to unwrap it.

Lorane hardly knew how to handle the subject, but began by telling how she prized a few of her mother's old relics which she had left to her on her death. As she talked she slowly unwrapped and brought to view a handsomely embroidered handbag. Mrs. Hayward gazed at it, at first without recognition, but suddenly discovered on looking at it more closely that it was some of her own former handiwork, which she recalled sending to her sister, Anna May, for a Christmas present, some years ago.

She turned pale and swooned away and would have fallen to the floor but for Lorane's quick motions, who caught her and placed her on the couch. She bathed her forehead, then gave her a drink of cold water, and sitting by her side prayed for her speedy recovery. Mrs. Hayward opened her eyes smilingly and remarked how foolish it was to allow oneself to be overcome by a little surprise.

When she had entirely recovered, she asked Lorane if she would mind relating the history of some of her past life.

"I am perfectly willing to tell the little that I know about it," Lorane answered. "I remember my mother's telling some friends of hers that my father passed away when I was two years old, leaving herself and me in the care of a neighbor. They were very kind to us. I know my mother had a very sweet voice, but very weak at that time. We stayed at Mr. Hamilton's most of the time, and Mrs. Hamilton, a nurse, took care

of mother through her last illness, which was quick consumption and lasted but a very few weeks.

"I remember how peaceful and happy she looked lying there, and I thought she was sleeping. The Allens, near neighbors, gave me a good home and were very kind to me, treating me like one of their own children. They sent me to school with the rest of the children. I graduated when 14 years old and began earning my own living at 15 years of age. I seemed to make good at everything I undertook to do, and when war was declared I joined the Red Cross as a nurse and started for the battlefields of France. I worked there over a year.

"I felt that the war would be over soon, and as my health was failing under the terrible strain I grew restless to be back in my own native land. So I obtained my release from the hospital where I was nursing, packed my trunk and took the first boat for home.

"And wasn't it strange," she continued, reflectively, "that it happened to be the same ship that you and Mr. Hayward were on?"

Mrs. Hayward, who had been thoughtfully listening, asked no further questions, but remarked that it often seemed to her that when people were in great need some one was sent to assist them, yet there were many, many mysterious problems which seemed to have no solution.

Lorane left the package lying open, with the little tintype picture on the handbag. It was the original from which the portrait hanging on the wall was taken, and printed in one corner was the name, Anna May Bowman. Leaving Mrs. Hayward, Lorane went up to her own room to dress for dinner, after which they

expected a few invited guests to come in to spend the evening.

Mrs. Hayward sat a few minutes, meditating on the coming to light of a great mystery. She wanted to be more fully persuaded in her own mind and concluded to examine the handbag more thoroughly. Going over to the table where Lorane had left it, she noticed a small tintype picture in its folds, which as she started to pick up the bag slipped out and fell to the floor. She picked it up, glanced at it and recognized it at once as being the same one that she had had enlarged.

She took it over to the portrait on the wall to compare and be sure there was no mistake, when she discovered in the corner in her own writing her sister's name, Anna May Bowman. She knew then there could be no mistake. Lorane was her sister's own child, her own beloved niece.

Lorane meanwhile had attired herself in one of her most becoming dinner gowns, a pale blue silk chiffon, made up with a darker shade of satin. She placed a large bunch of violets at her waist, with some of the flowers and a few green leaves nestling in the waves of her lovely golden hair.

Mrs. Hayward thought that she had never seen her look so beautiful. She was radiant over so unexpectedly finding her dear friend was her own aunt, and also looked forward joyously to meeting that evening her new friend and music teacher, whom she had met while in the city, and from whom she had arranged to take some vocal instruction.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Hayward were very fond of music and had made it a point to invite some gifted musically educated people to all their social evening entertainments. This evening their guests were all

members of a fine musical company. The manager had fallen in love with Lorane's voice and deemed it the greatest honor to have her as one of his pupils. He entertained high hopes that he could finally persuade her to become one of his company, knowing her range of voice was far above the average, and realizing that she possessed the grace and beauty that would make her a great star in the musical firmament.

The hour for the guests' arrival had come and they were received by all very cordially. They chatted merrily, telling of their different experiences in their early concert work and of their first appearance on the stage as public singers, all of which proved very interesting to their host and hostess. Lorane had had very little experience, and was very eager to catch every new idea which she felt she would need in her future work. She grasped all the little details very quickly.

One lady told of her first appearance as a soloist. She had joined a company with which she had practiced many times before a small audience in concerts, but had never sung a solo.

"The concert in which I was to make my initial appearance," she went on to say, "was meeting with good results. The audience was very appreciative and applauded most enthusiastically. I had participated in several duets, trios and quartets, but when the time for my solo approached I began to feel a little frightened. Several disturbing thoughts came to my mind, which I tried not to harbor, endeavoring to brace myself up for the ordeal. However, when the curtain was being raised for my number, stage fright seized me. My knees trembled violently and my body simply refused to move.

"Finally, the manager had to announce that this

number on the program would be changed to the last one. He then came to me, glared at me fiercely and told me that I had to brace up and sing when my turn came again. He said, 'Why, the very idea! The best number on the program, and you act so silly I feel like shaking you!'

"This made me very indignant, as I was not used to having an one speak to me like that. I determined to try, if I fell on the stage in the effort.

"So I went out in the fresh air, pulled myself together and with renewed courage went back and when my turn came walked out on the stage and sang with all the ease imaginable. When I had finished and the curtain fell, there were loud cheers, cries of 'Bravo!' and enthusiastic applause. I was really pleased to return and repeat my solo again and again. I felt as if I could sing all night and not get tired or feel any bad effects!"

The dinner was announced by Mrs. Hayward, one of those old-fashioned New York dinners, prepared under the supervision of the old housekeeper. The party was ready to partake of it, having ridden 25 miles in an open car, during which there began falling light snow, being the first real cold that had visited the eastern coast that winter.

Entering the beautifully lighted dining room, the company was greeted with the sight of many pieces of rich, old-fashioned silver, cut glass and hand-decorated china.

Mrs. Hayward asked the guests to choose their own places, which they proceeded to do with much laughter. You may be sure they all enjoyed the freedom accorded them so graciously by their hostess. They were, Mr. Bacon said eating with a coming appetite, as various

ones called for second helping of favorite dishes, as each one felt free to do.

After dinner, the remainder of the evening was spent in songs and instrumental music. The weather was growing colder and colder and the snow storm increasing in violence.

Mr. Hayward invited the entire company to stay over night, promising to take them into the city the next morning in his big sleigh.

"Oh, Mr. Hayward, you are very kind and the temptation is great," exclaimed the ladies. "Nothing would please us better than a good sleigh ride, but we will leave the decision to our leader, Mr. Bacon."

Mr. Bacon, however, thought it absolutely necessary for them to return that night, as there was some very urgent work that must be done early the next morning. So they bade their hosts good night, expressing their gratitude again and again for the many pleasures of the evening and rushing out just in time to catch the last car into the city.

The snow was now falling fast, one of those damp, sleety storms where the snow clings tightly, causing the tall pine trees that bordered the driveway to bow their high stately heads in salute to the stinging white crystals that powdered their green thickly in robes of ermine.

Lorane lingered in the drawing room a few minutes after the guests had gone to chat over the pleasing events of the evening and to quiet herself now that the excitement was over. Finally, bidding her aunt and uncle an affectionate good night she retired to her room, only to find that sleep seemed to have deserted her. So many new things seemed to be filling her mind that she felt a little bit disturbed.

But Lorane knew full well that peacefulness and contentment constituted the road to success in any line, and she immediately banished each worrying thought that presented itself. She knew that those who put their trust in Divine guidance would come out victorious on any proposition that confronted them. With a prayer in her heart therefore for all the world and the safe return of the soldier boys, especially her last interesting patient she had nursed while in France, she composed herself and was soon lost in sweet slumber.

Mrs. Hayward, when left alone with her husband, told him what had taken place between herself and Lorane that afternoon. Mr. Howard sat very quietly, absorbed in deep meditation. It brought back to his mind many scenes of the past that had been almost forgotten. However, he was thankful from the depth of his heart that the truth had come to light at last and that Providence had drawn Lorane to them.

Together they thanked God that a bright and brilliant star had been sent to illumine their pathway and resolved to do their utmost to help make life a successful and happy one.

Lorane awoke the next morning bright and happy, feeling as if a new era was dawning in her life. She raised the shades of her windows and looked out to see if it was still snowing. The sun was just peeping over the eastern horizon and the beauty and grandeur that met her eyes filled her soul with joy unspeakable. Lorane had never seen a real snow storm before and gazed in rapt admiration upon the snowy landscape, sparkling with innumerable millions upon millions of diamond crystals. These in turn threw out the brilliant hues of the rainbow as the rising sun spread its

golden rays over the glittering white mantle that shrouded the earth. The tall stately pine trees as if trying to kiss Mother Earth, as nothing else in all the world but the snow could have induced them to do.

Lorane, after viewing the scene of her heart's content, skipped down stairs with a joyful good morning and an apology for having kept breakfast waiting. Her uncle and aunt both assured her that no apology was necessary, as they desired her to have perfect freedom and do just as she wanted to.

"Oh, I do thank you both so much," Lorane exclaimed. "I know I shall be very happy here. I love you both dearly, and I am already learning to love New York. So many new and interesting things are constantly presenting themselves that I feel a new awakening in my soul which words are inadequate to express."

After breakfast was over and their many little duties were attended to, Mrs. Hayward called Lorane into her little sitting room. Taking the girl in her arms, she kissed her cheeks again and again, thanking God for his loving kindness and tender mercy in bringing her only sister's child, her own dearly beloved niece, to abide with and comfort them in their old age. Mr. Hayward, standing in the doorway, beheld the affecting scene, and coming up took both in his arms, kissing them very tenderly, while tears of joy rolled down his smiling face.

"Nothing will be left undone on our part to promote your welfare and happiness," he told Lorane, for which she thanked him and expressed her own profound pleasure in the turn events had taken in at last bringing the separated relatives together.

Mr. Hayward had been preparing a sleigh for a

long sleighride. Lorane on this particular morning was to take her first vocal instruction from Professor Bacon, who was due at 9 o'clock. All enthused over the coming sleighride and eager for her music lesson, the girl tripped upstairs to her room to dress, finding herself a trifle puzzled, not knowing how to attire herself in a way that would be appropriate to both occasions.

She soon decided to wear her new heavy blue serge, which was very becoming as a background for her beautiful golden hair and deep sky-blue eyes. Tripping downstairs with the lightness of a fairy, she found that Professor Bacon had arrived and was waiting in the music room. Lorane entered with extended hand and a pleasant "Good Morning!" saying: "I hope I haven't kept you waiting long." "Oh, no," he replied, "I thank you for giving me ample time to get warm before entering into our work."

The lesson proved very interesting to Lorane, as Professor Bacon found he had an apt and intelligent pupil. He praised her warmly for her readiness to accept in childlike faith all the little details so thoroughly and expressing the softer tones so perfectly. He thanked her for her willingness to learn and her good attention, and expressed his gratification to Mr. and Mrs. Hayward for allowing him to become her first teacher.

They in turn told him how grateful they were that Lorane was fortunate enough to secure such a good instructor. Professor Bacon then bade them good bye and was starting for the door, when Mr. Hayward said: "Wait a few minutes until the girls put on their wraps and we will all accompany you, taking you to the city in our sleigh."

Heavy stones had been heated, wrapped and placed in the bottom of the sleigh and its sides were completely lined with buffalo rugs. Professor Bacon walked with the ladies to the side door, where stood the high-backed, fur-lined sleigh. They were soon tucked into the great warm furs and were off for a good long ride to the city, which they all enjoyed immensely.

Mr. Hayward stopped at one of the best downtown hotels for luncheon, inviting Mr. Bacon to join them, which he very thankfully did, as he had become very fond of Lorane and was happy to be where she was.

After they had lunched Mr. Hayward left the others in the lobby, and went over to his bank, a few doors away, to attend to some business. Mr. Bacon soon regretfully bade the ladies good bye and left them, as he had to meet his class at 8 o'clock, and told Lorane that he hoped in the near future she would assist in some of their concerts.

When Mr. Hayward returned he asked his wife and Lorane if they would like to attend some entertainment. Lorane had read in that morning's newspaper of some noted singer who was to give a short musicale in one of the downtown hotel parlors, and looking up the item discovered that it was to be in the parlors of the hotel where they then were.

Taking the elevator to the parlors, they saw to their great surprise as they entered that it was a reception to some soldier boys who had just returned from France. The soloist whose singing had been noted in the papers was one of the company, a young officer, who was a native of California. His voice proved to be a very fine tenor and Lorane listened with absorbed attention and deepest enthusiasm.

Noticing her uncle talking with one of the soldiers sitting by his side, she took occasion to go and arrange her auntie's furs, so she could glance at the young man occasionally. He seemed to her to be far above the ordinary young man in every respect, looks and bearing, with a voice soft and musical. She tried to catch some of their conversation, but was unable to do so. She noticed that his voice seemed familiar even before she had an opportunity to get a good look at him, and felt quite curious as well as interested in finding if they had ever met.

When the concert was over the young officer hurried out with the rest of his company. She still failed to identify him, but could not help admire his tall, stately figure, superb physique and distinguished bearing.

Lorane could not repress a little feeling of disappointment as she watched him leave the room and enter the elevator on his way down. She noted his light olive complexion and dark curly hair, and while she could not detect the color of his eyes she felt a moral certainty that they were a beautiful dark brown.

After Lorane and Mr. and Mrs. Hayward reached home again, as they sat and discussed their outing, she told her uncle and aunt that she had never enjoyed a day more in her life. It was not only the beauty of the sleigh ride or the delightful music, but everything was so strangely new to her that it was absorbingly interesting.

At the dinner table that evening Lorane was very anxious to bring up the subject of the concert. She asked who the young officer was, as the Haywards spoke of him as if he might have been a former acquaintance. No, her uncle said, they had never met before.

"I asked him," Mr. Hayward continued, "if he knew the young fellow who was singing, and he answered, 'I certainly do. We grew up together, together played hookey from school, as boys were in the same grades in school and graduated from grammar school in the same class. He was my best friend all through college, and we graduated there at the same time also. We joined the army the same day, fought through it all side by side, and now are returning together to our dear old homes in Southern California.'

"He was certainly a fine conversationalist and as handsome as a picture."

"Did you learn his name?" Lorane eagerly inquired, desirous to learn all she could before the subject was dropped.

"No, I did not," answered her uncle.

The remainder of the dinner was eaten in almost profound silence. Lorane's thoughts reverted back to the hospital in France. There was a close resemblance between this young man and the one she had nursed just before leaving Europe for America, and she wished fervently that she might learn if they might be one and the same person.

CHAPTER VIII.

Alzaro Stops in New York to Visit His Uncle Thomas.

When Alzaro Stanton and Homer Moery had arrived in New York on their way home from France, Alzaro accepted his Uncle Thomas's invitation to visit him in his bachelor quarters awhile before leaving for his home in California. He promised Alzaro that if he would do so he would then accompany him to his home and pay a visit to his brother, Stanley Stanton's family, as it was his custom to do every winter.

Alzaro did his best to persuade his friend Homer Moery to remain with him, but the latter declined with regrets, but urged Alzaro to remain and visit with his uncle, as desired, because there would be so much to interest and amuse him there, and it would be but a short time in any event before they would be together again. Homer had written Louise that he would arrive on a certain day and he would not for all the world disappoint her.

Alzaro and his uncle, you may be sure, had a rousing good time. His Uncle Tom's business was in good shape so that he could spend most of his time with his nephew. Money was no object to Mr. Stanton, so he undertook to "give Alzaro the time of his life," as his Uncle Tom expressed it.

They were both members of the Y. M. C. A. and Alzaro became acquainted with the best people in New York. He soon found himself much interested in all their social affairs. Dinners, musical entertainments

and receptions were given in his honor, as the young officer from Southern California was very popular with Uncle Tom's many friends, besides all those that he made on his own account.

Meanwhile Lorane had attracted much attention with her beautiful voice. Professor Bacon had pushed her to the front in all his musical entertainments, in fact, he thought that he could not have a successful one without her assistance as a soloist.

One evening, near the end of January, they gave a special benefit for the soldiers who had returned from France. Lorane was to sing at this concert one of her own compositions, which her teacher thought a most wonderful one and had kept it for the last number.

The evening of the concert arrived, Professor Bacon had engaged the best musicians for the orchestra and had chosen six of his finest pupils for this special entertainment in honor of the return of the soldier boys.

All seats had been sold many days before the date of the concert, and many people were turned away disappointed that evening.

Mr. Stanton had invited several soldier friends of Alzaro's, enough to fill his own private box,—sergeants, lieutenants and a general or two, twelve in number. When all were arrived and seated, Mr. Stanton concluded that his was the most attractive box in the great theater, the officers all attired in their uniforms, and wearing various medals of honor.

The curtain raised and the sweet strains of the orchestra, rendered by the best musicians obtainable, swelled forth in, "My Country 'Tis of Thee." The diapason of the grand old organ added its harmony, inspiring the delighted audience with a patriotism such as few but soldiers ever knew. The second number

on the program was "The Star Spangled Banner," and as one man the audience rose and remained standing until the last sweet strains of our national anthem had died away into profound silence.

One by one the singers appeared as their parts called them on the stage. The first one to appear was Lorane Mayhan, the soloist and star of the evening. Alzaro listened with amazement and bewilderment as Lorane filled the vast auditorium with the soft, clear tones of her nightingale voice. Could it be possible, he questioned himself, that two different women possessed the same wonderfully sweet voice, and could each one affect him the same way with her liquid notes?

He very sensibly felt the love vibrations of Cupid's dart playing about his tender heart and the memory of by-gone days filled his soul as he sat amusing himself with his own experiences while the other singers sang their respective parts; so absorbed was he in watching Lorane and perusing the program to see when she would appear again.

At the end of the song the entire house sat for a moment in enchanted silence, then as if a bomb had fallen from heaven the audience burst forth into "Bravos!" and applause, until the curtain arose and Lorane came back on the stage, smiling and graceful as a queen. Stepping to the front she received a beautiful bouquet, which she held against her breast as she rendered for an encore one of the recent little patriotic airs which the boys had brought over from France, with a slight change in some of the words to suit the occasion.

Alzaro, to show his appreciation with the rest of the music lovers, beckoned to one of the ushers and asked him to send out to one of the best florists in

the city and order a large bunch of the choicest Madame Caroline Testout rosebuds, attaching a card with his full name and compliments. This he cautioned should be presented without fail to Lorane Mayhan after the last song on the program. Alzaro had perused the program very carefully and observing that the last number was an original composition by Miss Mayhan wished to show her his appreciation by presenting her with his favorite flowers.

The concert was not a very lengthy one, but it was especially appropriate to the time, and every selection was especially appreciated by both soldiers and the general audience to the fullest extent.

Between the songs, while others were chatting, Alzaro was very silent, trying to plan in his own mind how he might arrange for an introduction to Miss Mayhan. His brother officers, noticing his deep meditation, laughingly warned him not to let any of the songsters of the fair sex capture his heart, since it might prove fatal if he did.

The entertainment was nearly over, and the last number about to be sung. Alzaro felt a trifle nervous, for a closer and more careful reading of the last two verses of Miss Mayhan's composition, which were printed on the program, recalled to his memory that he had heard them sometime, somewhere, and he wondered who could have been in the mind of the composer when she wrote them.

Suddenly, and as though awakening from a dream, he remembered with a joyful heart that he had heard the song rendered by a little nurse, who had brought him back to life when he was found unconscious on the battlefield in France.

"Will wonders never cease?" he exclaimed to him-

self. "Now I am going to hear those same verses, sung by that same voice once again, after so many months of anxious waiting."

The orchestra began its prelude, the curtain rose, and Lorane stepped on to the stage, gowned all in snowy, shimmering white, her face that of a Madonna, her form stately and graceful, a veritable Goddess of Liberty.

She sang, with grace and ease, to the end. Again the whole house seemed spellbound for a few minutes, then broke forth in wilder enthusiasm than before, if possible. Bouquets were sent over the footlights by the dozen, and all recognized with graceful bows and smiles of appreciation.

Alzaro, watching this demonstration of the entire house, began to be quite uneasy lest his flowers, which he saw were the last to be presented, should be overlooked in the deluge of others. To his great joy, however, he saw that she singled them out from all the rest. She caressed them, lightly touched them with her lips, then in response to the curtain calls came back on the stage with the flowers pressed against her heart. She had chosen the last two verses of her composition as an encore. Having removed the sparkling ornaments she wore in her hair, she placed a lovely pink bud with a few green leaves taken from Alzaro's bouquet in her wavy golden locks, which to Alzaro looked far more becoming than the shining gems.

As the encore song ended, one of the soldier boys stepped on the stage, and asked the audience to give three rousing cheers as their last mark of appreciation of the fine program and the good work of the singers and musicians, with three more cheers for Professor Bacon for arranging such a treat.

While the crowd was moving slowly out, Mr. Stanton and his guests remained, waiting until the rush should be over. The house was almost empty and the lights were beginning to go out, when Mr. Stanton noticed in the box opposite them an old friend and his wife, whom he had not seen for sometime. Bidding the young officers good night, he took Alzaro by the arm, and walking across the stage he entered their box, greeting the couple and jokingly accusing them of being too intoxicated to leave at the proper time.

"No," laughingly denied Mr. Hayward, for it was none other than he and his wife; "we are waiting for our niece and Professor Bacon, who will join us here in a few minutes."

"Come, Alzaro," said Mr. Stanton, beckoning his nephew into the box; "shake hands with my friends, Mr. and Mrs. Hayward. This is my nephew, Alzaro Stanton, of Southern California," he continued, to his friends. During the course of the introduction, Professor Bacon and Lorane entered the box.

Mr. Hayward shook hands with the professor, congratulating him on the success of his concert, then introduced him to Mr. Stanton, his old friend and a resident of the city, and his nephew, young Mr. Stanton, from California.

Mrs. Hayward took Lorane by the hand, walked up to Alzaro, and placing her arms lovingly around the girl, spoke in tender tones:

"Mr. Stanton, it gives me pleasure to present my niece, Miss Lorane Mayhan, who like you is also from Southern California."

Lorane was still carrying Alzaro's bouquet of pink rosebuds, which he noticed with much pleasure as he was tendering her his congratulations on both her voice

and her composition, especially admiration of the last two verses of the little poem.

Fortunately for them Mr. Hayward had called his wife to help him explain some little incident that happened when they were in Europe. Consequently Lorane and Alzaro were not interrupted, which pleased them exceedingly, each being so interested in meeting the other.

Lorane, blushing over Alzaro's extravagant compliments, stood arranging the buds of her bouquet listening to him, when she noticed for the first time the card attached to the flowers. Turning the card over, she saw the name, Alzaro Stanton, with a little poem below.

"Rose, Rose, my beautiful Rose,
That grew in my garden so fair,
Bedecking the bowers, queen of all flowers,
With colors so rich and so rare."

While Lorane was looking the card over, Alzaro was admiring her beauty, noting with delight her beautiful hair, snowy white forehead and the lovely pink of her fair young complexion. Both stood silently thus a few minutes, each feeling conscious of reading the thoughts of the other. They had exchanged hearts while in Europe and felt that now they were again in their own beloved America their souls were united in the fondest, deepest love.

Lorane broke the silence, looking up and smilingly asking: "How did you know these rosebuds were my favorite flowers?"

It was no Alzaro's time to blush, and he felt the warm glow of love on his cheeks.

"Oh, because they are also mine, I suppose. I have a very choice bush of this variety in our garden in Cali-

fornia," he remarked. "It blooms almost every month in the year."

Their conversation was now interrupted by Professor Bacon, who, addressing Lorane, said: "We must go now, or the lights will be out and we will all be left in the dark."

Mr. Hayward had invited Professor Bacon, Mr. Stanton and Alzaro up to their apartments a few blocks away to have supper, which was their usual custom to have after attending the theater.

Alzaro offered to carry Lorane's bouquet for her, but she laughingly declined, remarking, roughly: "They are not a bit heavy and are not the least bother!" adding, "I love to have them near me, to smell their fragrance and admire their lovely form and color."

Professor Bacon walked with the Haywards behind the young couple, with a twinge of jealousy in his big, kind heart. He knew that Lorane had many admirers, but hitherto no one had ever taken the liberty of escorting her anywhere when he was present. He had not questioned his heart as to whether he loved her, but simply felt that she would be the dearest soul on earth to go through life with. Yet he thought that he must not be selfish and refuse to allow any one else to accompany her, once in a while at least. So he made the best of the situation and walked along with the elder Mr. Stanton and the Haywards until they reached the hotel.

Mr. Hayward led the way into his private dining room and seating the little company around his table requested them each to order the dishes he preferred the most.

Professor Bacon gave his order first, the others listening as he did so. He asked the waiter to bring

him equal portions of oyster liquor and unskimmed milk no seasoning of any kind whatever, with a spoonful of minced clams and a small dish of browned oyster crackers, with a few tips of celery.

They all declared that sounded good to them, and ordered the same brought to every one, with a change of salads as the separate tastes called for. The desserts were quite light, as none of them cared to eat very heartily at this late hour.

While engaged with their supper they all enjoyed Alzaro's narrative of his varied experiences while in France, especially when in action, describing strange events, including the peculiar means resorted to by the Germans when confronting the Americans. He also told them that the boys were requested not to relate the horrors they encountered over there, but to relate all the pleasant transactions they could remember.

He entertained them with one of his own experiences with a German general whom he took prisoner, who spoke English fairly well. When first captured he talked very roughly and threatened all kinds of revenge.

"I told him," Alzaro said, smiling, "that it didn't seem quite fair to take him away from his companions and friends, but that in war times we had to obey the commands of our superior officers. So, I said to him, I don't see any way other than that you will have to just come along. We will not harm you, but will treat you well and give you plenty to eat and a good place to sleep. He soon became quiet and we talked on many subjects. He said that the better class of people did not want to fight. They knew that taking life was not the true way to gain freedom. He thought the war was brought on by the Kaiser's wanting to gain the whole world. I talked with many of the prisoners

and found that far beyond my expectation they seemed to have kind hearts and a trust in God."

Professor Bacon, looking at his watch, asked his hosts to excuse him, expressing his regret that he must leave them in the midst of such an interesting subject. He thanked Mr. and Mrs. Hayward again for their kind invitation to supper, arose from the table, shook hands with all of them, expressing the hope that he would meet Alzaro often and hear more of his experiences in France.

Turning to Lorane he asked her to set the time for another music lesson. But Lorane had concluded not to take any more lessons at present, as she felt that she needed a rest after her hard work for the concert, besides, she told him, she would soon begin to arrange for their trip to California.

"What, so soon!" exclaimed the professor in a surprised tone; "I can't possibly think of losing you as my pupil. Besides I don't see how we can get along without you in our concert work."

There seemed to be no distinction made by him between his personal regret at losing her and his appreciating her valuable assistance so much that he felt her services could not be spared.

Turning to Mr. and Mrs. Hayward, he asked when they expected to start for California.

"We have decided to start the 15th of February," Mr. Hayward replied.

"Oh, how sad!" the professor exclaimed. "Well, I hope to see you many times before then," and bowing a good night to all present, he took his departure, with a feeling of disappointment in his soul he could not understand.

Mr. Stanton then asked some questions in regard to

their intended trip to California. He also mentioned something of his own annual visit out there to his brother, Alzaro's father, but stated that he had postponed his visit this winter later than usual owing to Alzaro's being with him. He said that he thought he and Alzaro would likely make the trip sometime this coming spring, in case Alzaro wished to, but meant to leave the date of their departure for his nephew to determine.

Lorane and Alzaro had been guilty of listening to this conversation, occasionally giving each other side glances, almost reading each other's thoughts as new ideas came rushing into their minds, and in the eye of imagination they could fairly see themselves together touring across the United States in one of the finest Pullman cars that could be secured.

Mr. Stanton finally arose to take his departure, saying it was a shame to keep folks from their rest and sleep so late. Mr. and Mrs. Hayward then invited Mr. Stanton and his nephew to call around to the hotel the day following, at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon, promising to give them a sleigh ride through the western suburbs of New York and on out to their country home, saying what a contrast to the snow covered ground of New York would be to the greenly-carpeted lawns of Southern California.

"Oh, we will be delighted to do so," exclaimed Alzaro, involuntarily, as he arose with his uncle to take their leave. "Nothing would please me more."

The next day, 2:00 o'clock found Mr. Stanton, promptly on time, waiting in the lobby of the Hayward's hotel. The temperature had moderated somewhat, and several little flurries of snow had followed the first heavy snowstorm, and the streets and roads

were never in better shape for sleighing than at that time.

When they finally reached Westol they found the house all warm and lighted, with a good hot dinner awaiting them. They had all enjoyed the sleighride immensely, and now they would appreciate the beautiful and comfortable home, with its elegant appointments and sumptuous dinner.

Alzaro's first remark to Lorane was, "Oh, so beautiful! It seems if love, joy and beauty confront us all the way."

Soon after they had removed their wraps and were comfortably warmed, Mrs. Hayward announced that dinner was served. It had been prepared under the immediate supervision of the old housekeeper, who had been notified by telephone that they would arrive home at a certain hour, accompanied by two gentlemen friends.

After the bounteous dinner, of which all had partaken heartily, with thankful hearts, they kindly expressed their appreciation to the old housekeeper, Mrs. Good, who sat at the end of the table to serve the drinks. Mr. Good generally sat by the side of his wife, but as he was not feeling well he did not make his appearance on this occasion. The old couple had been with the Haywards since their wedding day, and they treated them as kindly as they would their own brother and sister.

They arose from the table, Mrs. Hayward leading the way into the warm and cheerful parlors, where she invited her guests to be seated just where they thought they would be most comfortable.

Alzaro and Lorane chose the lover's chair, in the cozy corner, a little apart from the rest, which Lorane

had lighted up for this evening. She desired above all things that on this particular occasion the house should present its most attractive appearance and she took the greatest pains that only those lights should be turned on which would give the softest, most alluring effects.

After Mr. Hayward and Mr. Stanton had discussed first one subject then another with the greatest freedom, having long been confidential friends in social life as well as business affairs, Mr. Stanton asked his friend how the beautiful and talented Lorane had so suddenly come into their lives. "I don't recall ever hearing you speak of a brother or sister on either side," he added.

Mr. Hayward glanced at Lorane to see if she approved and asked her consent before telling her story. Lorane bowed assent, smilingly saying, "I am perfectly willing. You may tell it all."

Mrs. Hayward then related the history of Lorane's childhood up to the present, concluding with, "and now you see her sitting with your own nephew in the cozy corner."

"Well, well!" exclaimed Mr. Stanton. "A good story!"

"Very, very good!" confirmed Alzaro. "It is worth publishing."

"Suppose we have it printed right away," Lorane jokingly said.

"Some day we may," Alzaro rather soberly remarked. He then asked Lorane where she had attended school, and to his great surprise discovered that it was the same school he had attended, until he finished the fourth grade, when he was transferred to the new schoolhouse near his own home. He told

Lorane that he had played with the Allen boys in all kinds of games and had noticed their goodness to their two little sisters, he supposed them to be, as, never asking any questions concerning the relationship, he had never learned anything to the contrary.

TRIBUTE TO A ROSE.

Rose, rose, beautiful rose,
That grew in my garden so fair;
Queen of all flowers, bedecking the bowers,
With fragrance beyond all compare.
The tint of this rose is exquisite,
Its form is most sweet to behold;
It whispers the love of a lover
Far better than words ever told.
And out from this rose comes a message,
Whose meaning is surely divine;
The angels alone know the secret
That is hid in these petals of thine.
For the great loving heart of the Father
Sweetly tells of his love to the world
Through the heart of this beautiful flower,
That blooms with sweet fragrance unfurled.

CHAPTER IX.

The Engagement between Alzaro and Lorane.

At the close of their story, Mr. Hayward, rising, invited Mr. Stanton to go with him to their curio room, as he wanted to show him some very interesting specimens he had gathered while abroad. Mrs. Hayward followed the two gentlemen, asking Alzaro and Lorane to go also, but they declined with thanks, saying that they wished to finish the subject which they were discussing.

They were still seated in the cosy corner occupying the lovers' chair and enjoying the warm handsomely furnished drawing room. Alzaro thought there was no place on earth more appropriate than here in which to express his love for Lorane.

Alzaro was thankful for this unexpected opportunity to be alone with Lorane a few minutes, that he might pour out his love to her more frequently.

Taking in both his own her hand, that was resting on the arm of her chair, in his low, soft voice that was almost a whisper, he reverently said:

"In the deepest humility I thank God for his own wise providence in bringing us together. In His own mysterious way He has accomplished what we never could have done in our human limitations, nor could we have planned our own pathway so that it would have been half so wonderful. Some beautiful day in the near future you will be my own darling wife, won't you, Lorane?"

Lorane, nestling close in Alzaro's embrace, answered softly :

"Yes, we will be happy together, for I know Uncle and Aunt will not object to our union."

Then, with all the sweet reminiscences in which lovers ever delight, they rehearsed the incidents of their first meeting in the hospital in France, where their hearts were first stirred with the thoughts of young love's dream. They also dwelt fondly on their second meeting in the grand theater in New York, where their souls were united in a blissful anticipation of a new and happy life, which now opened glowingly before them, as they sat with hands clasped in fond content.

"Sweetheart," he said, "do you remember one beautiful day in early spring time in California, walking along the pavement of a lovely lawn with shrubbery and here and there a flower bed and arbors covered with an innumerable variety of trailing vines when in your hurry to meet some engagement, you were detained by the singing of a mocking bird in a magnolia tree? And do you remember the dear little speech you made at the close of his swelling notes? And did you realize then that that bird had another listener who was charmed with unspeakable joy as he saw a heavily-veiled girl walking briskly and as she came in hearing of the song bird and stepped lightly so as not to disturb the strain of music which he was rendering at that moment? Do you remember the message you gave him, telling him you were on your way to practice for a Red Cross Benefit at the Orpheum that night?"

At this Louise who had been listening with intense silence all through Alzaro's story, glanced up into his smiling face with the charming look of an angel on her brow, cheek and lips, and a heavenly love light in her

deep blue eyes, as clear and pure as the sky above, and whispering softly, "You, too, were there and felt the same vibrations of love I felt. Yes, I remember it all distinctly now.

"Yes, sweetheart, I was near by and heard it all, and do you know, dear one, my soul was so filled with the inspiration of the whole transaction, I was desirous to go down to the Orpheum that evening to see you and hear you sing. And immediately after dinner I dressed myself, took a down-town car, got off at the Orpheum, secured my ticket in one of the boxes nearest the stage, in order to be near you, to see your face and hear you sing. You will never know the great disappointment when you did not make your appearance. You remember your part was to sing in concealment to the young prince, who was forbidden to look on a fair woman's face, with the penalty of losing his crown if found disobeying the king's rules.

"I loved and was filled with enthusiasm with your singing but sympathized so deeply with the young prince's situation, I scarcely knew how to reconcile the two propositions. I felt the great disappointment, sorrow and worryment he was passing thru which was reflected in my own experience which I was at that moment encountering.

"God works in a mysterious way and his wonders are past finding out," explained Lorane.

Lorane's head rested on Alzaro's shoulder, as he clasped her in his arms. Pressing a kiss on her young, fair forehead, he again gave thanks and praise to their heavenly Father, concluding, "What God has joined together man cannot part and dare not try to put asunder."

They sat quietly in silence for some length of time,

neither speaking a word. Indeed, spoken words were inadequate to express their love and appreciation to God for his gloriously unspeakable gifts to his trusting children.

Presently Mr. and Mrs. Hayward and Mr. Stanton returned from the curio room. The weather outside was becoming so very intensely cold that Mr. Hayward insisted upon Mr. Stanton and his nephew remaining over night, telling them that he would give them another long sleigh ride on the morrow, to which they very readily agreed.

After the gentlemen had retired, Lorane confided to her aunt Alzaro's profession of love and his proposal of marriage, and asked what she thought about it. In the most loving tones her aunt replied:

"I am not at all surprised. I knew that his friendship for you was very great and his admiration of the highest character. I have admired his noble appearance and gentlemanly manners ever since we first became acquainted with him, and I feel assured that he will make the best of husbands."

Taking Lorane in her arms, Mrs. Hayward kissed her fondly, and asked the blessing of God to follow them all through their lives. Lorane kissed her aunt tenderly in return and thanked her for her approval and kind blessing.

They sat and talked up to a very late hour. Lorane had already formed the habit of asking her auntie's advice before acting on any subject, when together they would rehearse it over and decide upon the best course to pursue.

Mrs. Hayward thought it would be best for Lorane to resume her music lessons while in New York. Lorane spoke of Alzaro's intentions of having his voice

cultivated, and said she thought the idea of both taking lessons from the same teacher would very interesting.

"Well, whatever you and Alzaro agree upon will please both Mr. Hayward and me, as I am sure he will be willing to accede to anything that suits you and Alzaro," her aunt replied.

It was a very late hour, indeed, when aunt and niece retired that night. They had found so many subjects to be discussed and so many new arrangements to be made for the future, they realized that they would all be kept pretty busy for three or four months, at least.

They did not feel constrained to arise early the next morning, as Mr. Hayward had suggested the night before that there would be no rush about getting up in the morning, saying, "You may all sleep as long as you like, since there is no hurry about getting downtown."

Mr. Stanton and his nephew awakened about the same time. The sun was making its appearance over the beautiful snow-capped hills, while innumerable icicles were hanging from the roofs of the buildings and the evergreen trees around the house.

Alzaro had never beheld a real picture of this character before, and the scene that met his gaze this morning was beyond words to describe.

Alzaro and his uncle had often talked of Lorane and her accomplishments, and Alzaro had told many times of their first meeting in France, how she had nursed him back to life and the involuntary interest and attachment that sprang up between them from the beginning. He felt satisfied that his uncle would not object to any arrangements he might decide upon for the future.

Mr. Stanton was willing to back Alzaro's judgment on any plans he might make for himself, never doubt-

ing his highest ideas, which he knew his nephew possessed, nor his ability to carry out any cherished desire of which his mind could conceive. He had again and again assured the young fellow of this belief and of his willingness to furnish any amount of money required to meet whatever expenses he found it necessary to incur.

Alzaro told his uncle of his and Lorane's engagement.

"I am not at all surprised," said his uncle, "for I have noticed many, many times when discussing the pleasant subject of life the love blushes on cheek and brow of both of you and Lorane and knew that some day this would take place. Let me congratulate you on your wise choice and good judgment."

Mr. Stanton knew that large sums of money would be required to meet the demands, and he was sincerely glad that the time had come when he could assist Alzaro with whatever sum might be necessary to provide for the young people's future home, and had already deeded him fifty acres of rich land in a beautiful location in the foothills of Southern California, near his father's ranch.

Mr. Hayward had been up some little time, seeing for himself that the heat was turned on and the whole house warm and comfortable, when his two guests appeared. He met them at the foot of the stairs, warmly congratulating Alzaro on his engagement and extending heartiest wishes for his and Lorane's future welfare.

"Oh, they all know what transpired last evening, I see!" joked Alzaro, in his good-natured, jolly way, which always made every one he came in contact with feel better for being in his presence.

Just at this moment, Mrs. Hayward and Lorane made their appearance. Alzaro smilingly bowed as he stepped forward, and walking across the room with the air of a prince, extended a hand to each one.

"Good morning!" he exclaimed, with love and warmth enough to melt the frozen snow, if possible.

They stood opposite the great wide eastern window, where the golden morning sun was sending its rays through icicles and fairy frost tracings on the window panes, making a dazzling picture almost too bright for the eyes to dwell upon. Mr. Hayward and Mr. Stanton came up and joined in congratulations and felicitations to the happy pair, holding a real jubilee over the good news over Alzaro's success and Lorane's wise choice.

After breakfast, Mr. Hayward, in the sleigh drawn by two spirited bay horses, drove up to the side door and announced that all was ready for a long and enjoyable sleigh ride, which the others assured him they were all eager to participate in. Alzaro particularly appreciated the fine blooded horses, admiring their intelligence manifested when about to approach a dangerously close turn in the road, or any other thing that had an appearance of danger. They would slacken their pace of their own accord until the critical point was past, when they would bound off as though some one was urging them on.

On arriving at their hotel they met Professor Bacon, restlessly pacing to and fro, waiting for some one. Mr. Hayward stepped up and shook hands with him and presented the rest of the party as though they had never met before. Professor Bacon, seeing Alzaro with Lorane, let a feeling of jealousy possess his usually placid mind, and gave him such a cool reception that

it attracted the attention of the remainder of the party.

But Alzaro entertained no serious thought as to the professor's manner, but spoke and shook hands in his usual pleasing way, making joking remarks, then speaking of his pleasure in seeing him again. Professor Bacon, however, did not seem to appreciate Alzaro's jokes, but turned to Lorane, and in rather a commanding tone of voice remarked:

"I trust that you are ready to take up your music lessons again. It is not a good idea to have too long a vacation. You will forget everything you have learned and have to go all over it again."

Mrs. Hayward, observing that Lorane was not pleased with the professor's style of address, exclaimed:

"Oh, Professor, you know we are planning to take a trip to California soon, and Lorane has changed her mind about continuing her music."

"Oh! I did not remember about your going so soon. I am so sorry. Pardon me, Miss Mayhan, for advising you. I know you are very original and have ideas of your own. Sometimes, however, older minds can see the future better than younger ones can."

No one of the party seemed to appreciate his remarks, and he felt it very sensitively. Expressing his regret at having to leave them so abruptly, owing to his having a class awaiting him, he bade them a hurried good bye, and with a polite bow left the lobby.

And as the poor professor wended his way to keep his engagement with his class, he felt unaccountably sad and experienced a deep disappointment quite foreign to his usually sunny nature. He had become very much infatuated with Lorane. Her sweet voice and gentle, pleasing manners had won a place in his heart that would not be easy to eradicate.

Lorane was the only woman he had ever met whom he considered worthy of his love. He was persuaded in his own mind that some day she would be his wife. Now, to have some one come between him and the object of his adoration and blight his happy plans for the future, seemed to him more than he could bear and he could not reconcile himself. The hopes he had cherished seemed withered and the light that had illumined his pathway suddenly darkened.

Professor Bacon had always boasted rather extravagantly to his friends whenever the subject of matrimony had come up for discussion. He had claimed that a bachelor's life was the most satisfactory, and had asserted that among all his married friends there were very few who seemed to be congenial or were happily mated.

But since he became acquainted with Lorane his belief had changed. He had felt sure that the future held in store for him more than ordinary life contained, and the future in all aspects presented a radiant and promising front.

It was therefore a severe blow to have the desires of his heart thwarted and his fondest anticipations shattered, and presented a greater problem than his disturbed, puzzled mind could find a solution for.

After Professor Bacon's rather abrupt exit, the Haywards invited Mr. Stanton and Alzaro into their private dining room to have a good warm lunch, of which all were quite ready to partake after their long sleighride through the country and city.

While at luncheon Mrs. Hayward spoke again to Lorane about her music, and thought it would be interesting for her and Alzaro to engage the same teacher and take their lessons near the same time. They all

agreed to her wise suggestion and that it would be the right course to pursue. After they had finished their meal, Alzaro telephoned to several music teachers that Lorane had met in her musical career, and made arrangements for an interview with the one they considered the most promising.

Alzaro and Lorane entered into their studies with the firm determination to make good. They were together a great deal of the time and assisted each other over some of the most difficult places.

The young lovers spent many happy hours in each other's company riding horseback. Mr. Hayward presented each one with a fine single-footed trotter, Lorane's almost white, dappled with grey, Alzaro's a jet black.

Alzaro received many long and interesting letters from his old friend, Homer Moery. He felt that he about knew what was taking place between Homer and Louise by the general tone of the letters. Reading between the lines and adding two and two together brought out many secrets that were not meant to be revealed.

Meanwhile Lorane and Louise had opened a correspondence and felt that through its happy medium they were becoming fairly well acquainted, and began imparting to each other their little plans for the future. One thing of which Homer wrote told volumes to Alzaro.

"I am thinking very seriously," he wrote, "of building on my little ranch that is just opposite to one your uncle gave you for your twenty-first birthday present."

At this announcement, Alzaro immediately wired Homer: "Do not proceed with your plans any further until you hear from me by letter. I have something

to say to you in regard to building myself a home in the near future."

Homer answered Alzaro's telegram by return mail, addressing him by his old-time pet name, "Old Pal."

"I can see," he wrote, "and understand it all now. That little songbird you have been writing so much about has accepted your proposal of marriage, and you intend to build a home, just like mine, just opposite me, and you and your little girl are coming back to California, and we will be neighbors and live happily near each other the remainder of our existence on this planet. I can fairly hear you say, 'Homer, you have intuitively received my message.'"

"Well, Alzaro, for the last few days I have been thinking on this very same subject, and expected to write you soon about all my plans for the future and of my success in gaining the heart and hand of one of the sweetest girls on earth,—one that is capable of gracing the home of a king. I know that you have the same exalted ideas of Louise, your darling sister and my sweetheart, to whom I was betrothed in early childhood and from whom my allegiance has never swerved.

"And I am happy to learn that at at last you have found the object of your affections that you have so patiently waited for that God in his own good time would bring to pass, and now, dear beloved and long tried friend, we will not forget to ask God to supply all our spiritual needs all through the remaining years of our future existence. Good-bye, old friend, and let me hear from you soon."

CHAPTER X.

The Haywards Return From Their Pleasure Trip.

Alzaro and Lorane enjoyed their musical career very much. They sang in church choirs and benefit concerts and traveled all up and down the Atlantic Coast, accompanied by the Haywards and Mr. Stanton. They visited all the noted places, sang in many of the best concerts, and were greatly admired by all the leading musicians.

Alzaro's voice developed into a fine baritone, and he and Lorane made great hits singing together in duets. Wherever they went they met with great admiration and praise from all music lovers.

The Haywards' party had returned home, and the young couple were enjoying their horseback riding through the country around Westol. Springtime had arrived in the eastern states. The snow had disappeared from the hills and valleys and green vegetation was making its appearance where but a short time before everything was covered with snow, sleet and ice. The graceful maples along the sides of streets and roads were putting forth their light tender green foliage, and songbirds were filling the earth with their melodious strains.

Everything in nature seemed to be doing its utmost to give forth the highest thanksgiving, praise and glory to the Giver of all this bountiful good and the bestower of lovely gifts to the children of men.

The two young, single-footed horses which Mr. Hay-

ward had set aside for the use of Alzaro and Lorane were in constant demand. Alzaro's black was called Black Star, while Lorane's, with its abundant wavy mane and tail had been named Silver-Mane. They were both beauties, and the young people were very grateful for the privilege of having a horseback ride whenever they chose.

Mr. Hayward wanted the horses to be exercised every day and the lovers enjoyed their spirited mounts and pleasant rides immensely. They would take long jaunts through the country, and often rode in the city. Still, they enjoyed the country more, especially preferring one beautiful shady boulevard along the side of a picturesque winding stream, which was especially constructed for pleasure seekers who preferred to drive or ride their fine thoroughbreds to cars or autos.

The young people were both ardent admirers of nature, and would pace along the boulevard slowly, noting the changes in the putting forth of foliage as the season advanced, observing the different kinds of trees and shrubs and watching for the appearance of the little spring flowers and the many, many varieties of ferns and other green vegetation of every description.

They were certainly realizing the most blissful joy indigenous to young lovers' dreams. And it was just and right that it should be so. What will be the result when all young people, like Alzaro Stanton and Lorane Mayhan, have trusted in God to order their course and guide them in all their affairs?

They were taught in childhood that a useful, unselfish life is the secret of success; also that all others who study such lives and become interested in their course of procedure will reap the same results, and their lives will not prove a failure and disappointment,

but will blossom with happiness, good thoughts, words and deeds. Such lives will benefit all those who see or know them and those with whom they come in contact will be blessed by their kind and beneficent influence and they will reap the reward due those who have high ideals and good intentions, and put them in practical use in their everyday life.

YOU CAN A MESSENGER BE.

To those who are seeking a message,
You can a messenger be
By sending kind thoughts to the lonely
On the land or upon the deep sea.
You can change the sad face of the stranger
To one of sweet joy and deep peace
By thinking kind thoughts in the silence
Or speaking in love and God's grace.
By seeing the good that is present
In the one that is troubled and sad,
And doing some good deed of kindness,
You can make the lone heart bright and glad.

A double wedding was being prepared for at Alzaro's father's home. The decorations were given over entirely to the Japanese, and they were taking great pains, transforming every nook and corner that could be so handled into beautiful Japanese effects.

The new homes of Alzaro and Homer were being rushed forward to completion as rapidly as possible, with a double force of workmen under one of the best foremen that could be secured.

Across the continent, the party composed of the Haywards, Mr. Stanton, Alzaro and Lorane, with a maid, were busily preparing for their trip to California.

A few days before the date set for their departure,

Mr. and Mrs. Hayward and their niece bade good bye to Westol, their beautiful country home. They thought they had never seen it so lovely, as springtime was always appreciated in New York, and all the more after such a severe winter, so that this spring seemed unusually perfect and exquisite in its beauty. Lorane and Alzaro, devoted to the perfections of their own native state, confessed that they had never seen a more beautiful home than Westol.

Mr. Hayward and Mr. Stanton selected one of the finest parlor cars for the journey, equipped with everything that would make their trip a comfort and pleasure in traveling, so that they would be as cozy and comfortable as in their own apartments in their hotel in New York.

Alzaro wired his home folks the hour of starting and the expected time of their arrival at home, providing no unseen delays occurred in transit. On the way, however, they encountered much delay. There had been heavy rain and wind storms, causing much damage and destruction.

One afternoon their train pulled into the ruins of a small town that but a few hours before had been almost completely destroyed by a cyclone, and help of all kinds was called for immediately. Mr. Hayward's party put aside all considerations of self and their personal pleasure, and entered into any kind of work where their services seemed the most urgently needed.

Alzaro, with his great heart of love for suffering humanity, threw himself into the hardest and most laborious work wherever required, taking hold so efficiently and instructing others in the work of rescue and restoration that he was soon recognized as a leader with his practical, helpful ideas, besides proving the best workman of all on board the train.

Lorane through her great spiritual and intuitive healing powers administered with wonderful ability to the wounded and dying. Mr. Hayward and his wife threw themselves into the breach as actively and capably as any of the younger people, Mr. Stanton being a close second. Mrs. Hayward provided hot drinks and sandwiches for as many as she could accommodate.

After the track was cleared of all obstructions and the train ready to proceed on its way, Mrs. Hayward found that Lorane was missing. Alzaro and Mr. Hayward notified the trainmen that the young lady of the party had not made her appearance and not to start until she was found.

They all started in different directions to search for her, arranging that whoever discovered her should have the engineer notify them by blowing the whistle of the locomotive a long, loud blast.

You may know there was some excitement, until the sound of Alzaro's voice notifying the engineer was heard almost as distinctly as the following whistle, as he called, "Hoo, hoo! The lost is found and is all right!!"

Lorane had been looking after a poor family, father, mother, and four children, who had lost everything, all having been blown clear away except an old, dilapidated stable, which some freak of the cyclone had left standing. The mother and one child were badly injured. Lorane made them as comfortable as she could in the short time and with the limited materials at her command.

She had hired a man and had him carry almost everything from the car that she thought would make them comfortable. Lorane shared her own clothes and bedding and all the provisions, not leaving enough

for her own comforts, so deep were their hearts moved by the unfortunate man's sufferings who had everything taken away by the recent storm.

The party gave everything they could spare to the suffering ones, and formed a committee to distribute to each according to his needs. They all regretted deeply having to leave the afflicted ones so soon.

Alzaro wired his father that they could not be at the station at the time they had expected on account of some damages on the road caused by a recent storm, but would wire them later the exact time they would arrive.

The remainder of the journey was spent in simple games, reading good books or conversing on every congenial and bright topic the party could think of, never once alluding to the horrors they had witnessed a few hours before. They all knew by experience that the least said or thought about any sad event the sooner it would be forgotten.

They arrived at their destination in California nine hours later. Homer and the Stanton family were at the station to meet them with their big touring car to take the party home.

It was a happy reunion between Alzaro and his uncle with the family and a joyful forming of acquaintances with all the strangers. They were very anxious to see the little songbird Alzaro had praised so much and had won for his own, as well as Lorane's uncle and auntie about whom she had written so much in her letters to Louise.

Words could not be found to express the pleasure they all manifested on reaching the Stanton home, where the Japanese were still doing all in their power in their own artistic way to beautify every part of house and grounds.

The Stantons had invited the whole party to make their commodious home their headquarters, which agreeable invitation was cordially accepted. Several Japanese families had been engaged to assist in all kinds of work required in preparing for their visitors and the subsequent wedding. So you may be sure there was something doing all the while to keep things going smoothly right along.

Finally the day for the double wedding was announced and the guests invited. The Stantons were very original people, following to a marked degree their own ideas. And whenever a new proposition came up they all consulted with each other as to the best course to pursue. As a rule they did not follow the ways of the world, but acted as their own consciousness dictated.

Louise especially had many new ideas concerning the wedding day. The guests were to be the members of the little church and Sunday school, both old and young.

The brides were to wear simple white net, made over some very soft, lustrous goods suitable for wedding gowns, with natural orange blossoms gathered from their own orange trees. They were to wear no ornaments but their rings. No presents were to be given outside of the family. All the children were to be dressed in pale blue and pale pink, equally apportioned, according to the plans decided upon by Louise and Lorane for the march, the color scheme throughout the entire house and grounds being pale blue, pale pink and white.

The whole lower front yard facing the road was five hundred feet wide, with a broad driveway on either side. Near this driveway entered from the outside,

walks on the side circled through the lawn up to the center walk that led up to the residence, forming a half moon shaped plot of ground. In each corner of this crescent plot the Japanese had formed a star in beautifully colored flowers, constituting one of the most exquisitely beautiful and artistically designed bits of landscape gardening, such as none but a real artist could produce.

The upper lawn, near the house was adorned with some very rare shrubs and flowering trees, with here and there a bed of the most fragrant and delicately tinted flowers that could be obtained.

In the center of the half moon a highly polished platform had been placed, over which hung a large bell, covered with delicate pink, blue and white flowers, arranged so as to represent the American flag on four sides of the bell. A wistaria vine in full bloom from the lower edges, its long, trailing flowers forming a beautiful fringe around the base of the bell.

Little rustic tables and chairs were placed all around, ready for the luncheon to be served as soon as the ceremony was finished. On either side of the wide walks leading from the house and encircling the crescent shaped plot of ground were rows of Japanese cherry blossoms, arranged so as to form an arbor over the walks. Some of the flowers were natural, although the greater part were artificial, made by the clever fingers of the Japanese decorators, whose work was so perfect that it would take the clearest vision to detect the difference between the products of art and nature.

The morning of the wedding day had arrived. It was one of those balmy spring mornings, when everything seems to know that something unusual is going to happen and all nature is ready and willing to join

in a glad jubilee with the merry dancers that would soon gather at the Stanton's home on this day of all days, to participate in the festivities that have so long been in course of preparation.

The whole neighborhood had taken the deepest interest and the affair had been talked of for several miles around Fairbanks.

The guests began to arrive, all making themselves at home, taking off their hats and wraps and looking after themselves in general.

At 10 o'clock the musicians arrived, and immediately began rendering their selections, filling the atmosphere around the Stantons' home with soft, sweet melodies.

The first number they played was, "Love in Idleness," a very appropriate selection for this occasion as well as one that would cheer the souls of all music lovers.

The dew still lingered on leaves and flowers, and the perfume from orange blossoms, hyacinths and other fragrant blooms made it seem as if the windows of heaven were opened to shower down incense on the bridal couple, while Mother Earth offered her tribute of beauty, love and grandeur.

The little feathered songsters round about, inspired by man's sweet music, burst forth with their shrill musical notes, to which the musicians listened with deep interest. A mocking bird that had made its home in a large magnolia tree filled the air with its vibrant, tireless trills, echoing back the notes of oboe, clarinet, flute, or whatever other instrument happened to take its fancy.

The noon hour was near at hand. The children were called together and placed in line to begin their march.

At the tap of the wedding bell the musicians sprang a surprise on the brides and grooms by sounding the

bugle call just as the bell was ready to tap. It came as a surprise to all, and much intensified the enjoyment of all the guests as well as of the brides and grooms.

Then as the big bell tapped its summons, brides and grooms made their appearance. The first notes of the wedding march rang out. The bridesmaids led the march, the brides next, the grooms and groomsmen in the rear, the children following close behind, all stepping in unison with the strains of the wedding march.

When they reached the parting of the ways that led around the crescent, the brides and bridesmaids turned to the right and the grooms and groomsmen to the left, meeting at the center in the arbor under the beautifully decorated bell. There the respective fathers gave their daughters to the men of their choice.

The moving rites of the ceremony over, the minister pronounced the twain one, according to the laws of our country. The musicians were seated between the arbor and the boulevard in front of Mr. Stanton's place, a bandstand having been erected and decorated for this day's festival. There they had played soft, sweet strains all during the wedding service, which changed to joyous notes of exultancy as the young couples stood receiving congratulations and greetings afterward.. They also played during the wedding luncheon, and, after partaking of the delicious refreshments themselves, furnished music all afternoon for the dancers.

That evening the happy couples took the train, intending to go to Honolulu and other places of interest to spend their joint honeymoons, taking with them the blessings of loved relatives, friends and acquaintances.

CHAPTER XI.

Uncle Tom's New Business Proposition.

A few days after the wedding festivities Uncle Tom remarked to his brother: "How long will it be before something else happens? It makes me feel sort o' lonesome, this settling down after so much excitement—like there was a slump in business or a drop in the money market. It is very much like one had lost his best friend or a much treasured article, or something of that sort. It's difficult to find words to express the feeling.

"I believe I would like to live in a whirl of excitement all the time, especially of the kind we have just been having. It makes one feel as if the Elixir of Life had dropped its love balm into the recesses of the heart."

The two brothers sat silently for sometime, neither speaking, but both thinking very deeply. Mr. Stanley Stanton had had a vision of a great change in his brother Tom's life and affairs, but had not mentioned it even to his wife, fearing it might be a foolish fancy, so had concluded that he would keep silent and let matters pursue their own course.

Uncle Tom's mind of late had been filled with new visions of a home of his own in Southern California. He had never hitherto entertained the idea that a woman could add to a man's happiness or be of any assistance in accumulating money. Indeed, he thought their main object in life was to spend a man's money.

Therefore he had never given women much place in his mentality, or if he did just thought of them as being a sort of necessary evil, thrown in to make a variety in the constitution of the world's affairs.

Of late, however, since visiting his brother's family, a new light had crossed his path. He found himself enjoying the companionship of children as never before, and found women more interesting and the idea of a home life more fascinating.

The building of Alzaro's and Louise's darling little bungalows, with their suggestion of a charming outlook for the future, doubtless had its influence. Then the newly arranged gardens and the planting of shrubbery and fruit trees gave, he thought, new "pep" to life, while the hundreds and one details connected with the making of the new homes all tended to add to his feeling that being an old bachelor was rather a failure. He saw that there is something in life worth while when lived for and with others, making one feel like living for ages.

All these new suggestions were now coursing their way through Uncle Tom's mind, filling his mental atmosphere with pleasanter ideas than had ever before occupied his attention.

Later on, when the brothers were taking their usual morning stroll through the orange and lemon groves, Uncle Tom confided in his brother Stanley the strange visions that were so mysteriously forcing themselves upon him and asked his brother's advice and assistance in solving these problems, for which he himself could not find a solution.

Still Stanley remained silent, until Tom remarked: "I hope I haven't sprung a question too hard for you; have I?"

"Oh, no, no! I was just thinking."

"I know," Tom continued, "that you have been all through this in your earlier days, so it appeared to me that if you would jog your memory a little bit you might think of something that would give me a clue as to what course to follow. Just treat me as a teacher would in assisting a pupil who was stalled on a mathematical problem and could not figure his way out. And what do you say to having the widow Green and her children come and spend the day and help us to get better acquainted?"

"Well, well! You caught my idea," exclaimed Stanley. "We are going to have Mrs. Green and her children down tomorrow to help Elizabeth about some housework. Her good taste, common sense and willingness to help everywhere are very valuable to us when any extra work is needed. So, Tom, if you don't mind, in the morning you may take the electric car and go over after them. We will not have very much to do, but will spend the day in visiting, romping with the children and helping little Tommy exercise his pets, which gives the children so much amusement."

"All right," returned Tom; "that is rich and I feel sure will work out right. Thank you, brother! I will be up early in the morning and carry out your plans."

Sure enough, the next morning Uncle Tom rose earlier than usual, with a smile upon his face and a twinkle in his eyes, ready to do his brother's bidding.

The sun rose above the hilltops, spreading its golden rays over hills, orchards and gardens as far as the eyes could see. The balmy atmosphere of a Southern California spring day fanned the cheeks and brows of all lovers of nature. The invigorating scent of orange blossoms filled the whole valley. What wonder that

Uncle Tom's heart was filled with joy unspeakable, listening to the musical notes of the countless feathered songsters that flitted from tree to tree as he drove along past tall eucalyptus groves or spreading pepper trees up the canyon to the home where Mrs. Green and her little children lived?

The widow had five little ones in her tiny abode, her own three and two of her widowed sister's, who had but recently passed on to join her husband in the Great Beyond, leaving her children to her sister's tender care.

Mrs. Green was delighted when she saw who was driving the car. She had learned to admire and respect Mr. Thomas Stanton above all other men of her acquaintance. He was very kind and gentle with the children and paid so much attention to the poor and needy, seeing that they had their equal share with the more fortunate, that to know was to admire him.

Uncle Tom was like his brother Stanley. He had a big, generous heart, and gave largely to charitable institutions,—hospitals, orphans' homes, and so on, in New York, and now in California he also saw great opportunities for charitable work.

As Mr. Stanton drove up to Mrs. Green's cottage she and all the children were out in the front yard arranging some flower beds and all clapped their hands with joy. They had all learned to love Mr. Stanton for his kindness to them and it made them happy to see him coming. They know too they were going to have a nice car ride and were pleased when Mr. Stanton told them they were all invited to his brother's home to spend the day. They were all delighted to have the pleasure of another day at the Stanton's home where they enjoyed so much playing with Tommy's pets.

Mrs. Green and the children gave vent to their cheerfulness all along the way, laughing and finding the funny side of everything, and every turn of the road suggested some bright, happy thought as they passed by.

As Uncle Tom drove up to his brother's house, little Tommy was out with his four goats harnessed and hitched up to the tiny cart, ready for the sport of the day. Nothing pleased Uncle Tom more than to help the children with their innocent games and assist them over their little rough places.

The close of the day found Uncle Tom very well acquainted with Mrs. Green. They had conversed on many subjects that were interesting to both. He was surprised to hear her express herself so brightly and intelligently on many lines of business, while her high and exalted ideas as to the bringing up of children caused him to entertain the deepest respect and admiration for her. He complimented her on her broad outlook in that respect, adding that she should really be the matron of an orphans' home.

Mrs. Green thanked him, laughingly, and said: "I am having the necessary training and experience needed for such a position in the care of my own little ones., here in my own home."

Uncle Tom found Mrs. Green so interesting that he took great pleasure in taking Gracie and Tommy up to Mrs. Green's to play with the other children while he and Mrs. Green talked. He told her that his object in life now was the establishing of an orphans' home, but that he found it rather difficult to do business on that line alone, but felt sure that if he had some good trustworthy woman to help him that he would have much better chance of succeeding.

He asked her advice on the subject. At first she hesitated to answer him. Finally, as if awakening from a dream, she assured him that she thought his ideas were most excellent. Women naturally have a different feeling toward children than mankind has, and intuitively know the little things that children require to make them healthy, vigorous and happy.

The subject was discussed between them, pro and con, going into every little detail freely, but the problem nearest Mr. Stanton's heart seemed the most difficult to approach. He looked out and saw the shadows lengthening and the day far spent. He called Tommy and Grace to gather their toys together.

"It is time to return home," he told them. "Your parents will be wondering what has become of us all."

At the dinner table that night Mrs. Stanton asked Uncle Tom how he had enjoyed the day.

"Oh, very much, indeed," he replied. "I think Mrs. Green is the most interesting woman to talk business with, on all lines, that I ever conversed with, and she expresses her ideas so clearly and simply that any one must understand. I think she would make a good partner in almost any kind of enterprise. Her business facilities are far superior to those of any woman I ever met. We were discussing the orphans' home problem today, and I see that she has fine ideas and all that she needs is a chance to put them in effect. She would be a bright and shining light as the matron of such a home."

A pleased but knowing smile passed between Stanley and his wife, as they agreed with Tom, and Mrs. Stanton remarked: "We have been acquainted with Mrs. Green for several years and always found her to be an honest, upright lovely character far above the wealthier

class. She is always cheerful and happy, looks on the sunny side of life and trusts implicitly on God's all providing law for health, peace and prosperity and asks God's protecting care for all problems that comes in her pathway. She is a good, kind, gentle mother for her own and for her sister's children is not partial in any respect whatever, and gives them all the same kind attention."

CHAPTER XII.

The Reward of Love.

One morning as the two brothers were walking up to look after the planting of some fruit trees on the boys' ranches, their conversation turned to Mrs. Green and the condition in which her property was involved.

Uncle Tom told his brother there was a heavy mortgage on her place, which if not lifted soon would cause her to lose all she had.

"Well, well!" exclaimed Stanley. "We must look after this and help her out of her trouble. You know we are commanded to care for the fatherless and widows. So here is an opportunity and even if it requires the tenth of our income we certainly couldn't use it to serve God in a better way."

"Brother Stanley," said Tom, meditatively, "why is a business proposition with a woman so much more perplexing than with a man?"

"It must be you do not approach a woman in the right way. You have to deal with a woman altogether differently from what you do with a man. In a business you undertake with a man you make up your mind you are going to win. You are sure of your ground, if your motives are right and you have considered the affair from the standpoint of the Golden Rule. Knowing that all concerned will be benefited by the transaction, you forge ahead without any doubt whatsoever. You are confident that success will result from any line of business you choose to take up. You approach a

man in a cold, sordid, hard business way, and he responds in the same attitude of mind, both realizing that honesty is the best policy and that an upright, straight, honest proposition never fails to bring satisfaction in the end.

"But a good, motherly woman, being naturally of a loving disposition, needs a little gentle coaxing before she can make up her mind to any proposition. A well-balanced woman takes the question up, views it from all sides, turns it over and over and weighs it well before deciding on an answer.

"So you see, Tom, if you do not prove to her that you are capable of making a good, loving, true companion and a kind, gentle father, she may turn the the proposal down as worthless! She would naturally prefer to go on in her own independent way, feeling that she has taken the true course and escaped the cursed yoke of matrimony shared with one unworthy and rejoicing that she is still a free woman."

Uncle Tom pondered deeply in his heart over all the new ideas his brother had given him, and resolved to proceed and win the good will and love of the fair, gentle widow, Mrs. Green, feeling that the remainder of his life would be blessed if he could have her as a faithful, loving companion.

He called to see her the next morning, driving over in the large new car he had just purchased. He was determined that Mrs. Green and her five children should have the first ride in it, and invited them to go with him on a long jaunt, to the beach, or anywhere she would like to go.

Mrs. Green was agreeably surprised, and although Tom had found her busily engaged in doing a good sized washing for the children, she gladly put it aside

and dressed the children for their pleasure trip. Meanwhile Uncle Tom made himself useful nailing some loose boards on the chicken corral, a recent heavy wind having torn them loose.

Mrs. Green dressed her oldest boy first, and like all boys he had to rush out to the chicken pens to assist in nailing on the boards. He told Uncle Tom that his mother had been wishing some one would come along and help her get the corral repaired.

Little Howard, a bright, jolly boy, eight years of age, felt that he was capable of giving Uncle Tom instructions in repairing any building or anything else that needed repairs any place on the ranch.

Uncle Tom and Howard had taken many pleasant strolls together, looking over the small chicken ranch and building little pens for the small chickens and turkeys. Uncle Tom saw a bright future for Howard, and determined to assist him in getting a good education.

Pretty soon all the children came running out, glad to have the opportunity of going to the beach and delighted with the prospect of a ride in the fine new car. With its silver mountings, highly polished maroon body and shining top, it certainly was a beauty.

Mr. Stanton, Howard and Ebell, the oldest girl, occupied the front seat, while Mrs. Green and an old friend who had come from a neighboring town to spend the day, occupied the back. Mr. Stanton had placed the two low seats for the children, so there was ample room for all.

You may know this was a happy party as they started on their day's outing. And none was happier than Uncle Tom, who thanked kind Providence for its goodness in providing him with means he could use to

help those who were deserving and were not able to do for themselves.

The children enjoyed sailing along the smooth boulevard, chatting merrily of the various objects that attracted their attention as they wound in and out and around the curves, bringing new scenery into view and affording them much interest all along the way.

Finally they came in sight of the grand old ocean, its white-capped waves stretching out as far as the eyes could see, to where the clear blue sky stooped down to kiss the placid waters, rippling in softly transparent green tints to the far horizon.

Mrs. Green had brought along rompers for the children, so they could paddle in the waves along the shore to their hearts' content. Uncle Tom soon attired himself in his bathing suit, and throwing his long coat over it started the children to play different games before he took his plunge in the surf.

Mrs. Green, while supervising the children's dressing before they left home had prepared a luncheon to take along for their picnic. She had filled a large kettle with newly laid eggs gathered from her own pens and a pail with butter fresh from the churn, made out of the cream furnished by her own Jersey cows.

Uncle Tom had provided all kinds of the best fruit that he could find in the market and bought several loaves of sweet, wholesome bread, along with different varieties of good mixtures for sandwiches.

At advantageous points overlooking the beach tables and seats were provided for just such family picnics. Mrs. Green spread her long white tablecloth on a table near the water, where the children could watch the waves as they rolled in, for the tide was now coming in and the waves were rolling high.

After luncheon, the children were again dressed, and the party walked around to see the different amusements. Some of the younger ones had never been to the beach before, and the merry-go-'round and other attractions had a deep fascination for them. Uncle Tom was willing to have them see and take part in any of these attractions that Mrs. Green thought best for them.

It was late in the afternoon when they started home, happy in the thought of another long car ride before them.

They arrived home in time to milk the cows and feed the fowls. Mrs. Green then gave the children some bread and milk, undressed and put them to bed, a tired but happy, contented lot.

CHAPTER XIII.

Uncle Tom Still Hopeful.

That night, after Uncle Tom had eaten dinner with his brother's family and had talked freely of the day's amusements, he retired to his own apartment, to meditate over what course to pursue in regard to the future. He was not exactly disappointed with the outcome of the day's outing, but he had hoped that during the course of it he might have an opportunity to talk with Mrs. Green on the subject that was now dearer to his heart than any other, yet seemed the hardest to manage to approach with her.

Still, though such opportunity had been denied him, he was not in the least discouraged, but resolved to make another effort sometime in the very near future. He asked Divine Wisdom to guide him in this affair, as in all other undertakings, and to give him patience and wisdom to do the right thing to bring about the best results for all.

He knew from past experience that when he obeyed the highest promptings of his own soul the results were always satisfactory. Whenever any delay occurred in any proposition he had found that it was for his good, sometimes showing him how to build a surer foundation and entertain a deeper trust in the all-providing law of Divine Love, that is always coursing its way through all business transactions, as well as every other affair in experience, and is the sure protection of all those who will rely wholly on its guidance.

The next morning Uncle Tom and his brother and family all drove over to Mrs. Green's home. They wished to talk further with her about the steps to take to release her place from its indebtedness. They went on to tell her that they had plenty of means in their own possession, saved up for charity's use, and always employed for the benefit of widows and orphans wherever their best judgment suggested or the need seemed to be the greatest.

They further said that if she was willing to trust them they would take the matter up for her, look after the title, lift the mortgage and pay off all indebtedness, giving her a secured deed and freeing her from all worry as to where money would come from to provide for all future needs.

Mrs. Green was so overcome with gratitude that she could not find words to express the thankfulness in her heart, but sat quietly with tears of joy streaming down her angelic face. Mrs. Stanton broke the silence by saying:

"There is only one way we have of loving our neighbors as ourselves, as we are commanded to do, and that is when we see a fellow being in distress not to shut up our bowels of compassion and mercy and allow our brothers and sisters to suffer and go hungry. I know, my dear Mrs. Green, you will take this in the right spirit, and give all the glory and praise to God, who gives his trusting children all the good things of life to enjoy."

Mrs. Green wiped the tears from her eyes, and with hands folded across her breast thanked God for his unspeakable mercies and bounteous gifts. Then turning to her kind friends, she said:

"It seems as if the windows of Heaven have opened,

and God is blessing me with goodness, pressed down and running over! Now, let me say to you all that I believe this goodness from you comes to me in answer to my repeated prayers. I have asked God in his own wise way to provide for me and my little ones. This is why I am so overjoyed. And to you, kind friends, I can never find words adequate to express my deep gratitude for this and all your kindness to me since my trouble began. God will reward you for the deeds you have done in his name, and pour out his rich blessings upon you."

As the Stantons arose to take their leave, Uncle Tom took Mrs. Green's proffered hand in both his own, and said, in deep, tender tones:

"Mrs. Green, you have pronounced a blessing upon us that will accompany us all through life! And we will provide, with the help of God, a way so that you and your little ones will never know want in the future. Good bye, and God bless you!"

Mr. Thomas Stanton closed a deal with one of the neighbors for 150 acres of rich valley land adjoining Mrs. Green's little ranch. He intended to begin immediately to transform it into a beautiful home, provided with everything the heart could desire in order to make it homelike and attractive.

He would need quite a force of men to do all this, and these men would require a good boarding place where they would be provided with the best of food. He mentioned this to his brother and brother's wife and Mrs. Stanton right away said:

"Why, Mrs. Green is a good cook. I think she would like to take the work. Suppose we drive down and see her about it. It won't do any harm to find out if she feels equal to undertaking it."

Accordingly, immediately after dinner the entire Stanton family drove over to Mrs. Green's, to spend the evening. On their arrival they found Mrs. Green, her friend and the five children seated around the supper table partaking of their humble evening meal, all expressing cheerfulness, the children with clean, happy faces and hair combed and shining. The table-linen was fresh and snowy white and everything inside and outside seemed in immaculate order.

The children ate quietly, except now and then they would think of something funny they saw at their memorable outing at the beach or on their way there or returning. As each child finished eating, the napkin was folded, and all remained quietly in their seats until all had finished the meal. Then Mrs. Green inclined her head to them as she arose and without further direction the larger ones placed the chairs and helped the younger ones with the same order as if no visitors were present. The table was soon cleared of the dishes and the games for the children brought out.

Mrs. Stanton, drawing Mrs. Green a little to one side, asked her how she would like to board a few men, just to give them three meals a day. Uncle Tom and his brother overheard the query and joined in the conversation. Uncle Tom stated he had purchased the ranch adjoining her on the south and would require men to set out and cultivate fruit trees and make all the improvements necessary for a fruit ranch.

Mrs. Stanton said: "Of course, if you don't feel equal to it you must not give it another thought. We concluded that we had better mention it to you first before making a proposition to any one else or deciding on any other arrangements."

Mrs. Stanton continued: "We will furnish every-

thing needed. You will have to have some one to assist you, of course. We would not think of allowing you to undertake it alone without any one to help you and it will provide a good income for you."

"Think it over and let us know soon," Uncle Tom broke in.

"Oh, I know I can do the cooking all right, if everything else is furnished in the way of dishes, cooking utensils, and so on, and I believe Mrs. Lay here will help me. She is a very good cook and I would be delighted to have her come and live with me. We have been friends from childhood, attended the same school and helped each other over all our little difficulties. I am sure we will both enjoy the privilege of earning some extra money. Mrs. Lay has two children to support by her own daily work, with no assistance whatever from any one. I feel sure she will be glad to bring her children out here and live with me awhile, as long as there is work of any kind for her to do; won't you dear?"

"Nothing could please me better, dear Claria," the delighted woman answered.

The sandman had begun to visit the children. The Stantons, thanking Mrs. Green for a pleasant evening, arose to take their departure. Mrs. Green assured them that they could depend on her and Mrs. Lay to prepare the food for the workmen, and Mrs. Stanton and the other visitors expressed their pleasure in meeting and making the acquaintance of her friend and thanked Mrs. Lay for her willingness to assist in cooking for the men.

"And now," Mrs. Stanton continued, "I want you to come and visit us often and every time that Mrs. Green and the children come. Whenever possible for

you to arrange it, you must come to spend the day, bringing your little ones with you."

The work on Uncle Tom's ranch progressed rapidly. Meantime, Uncle Tom as well as the ranch was being transformed. He entered into all kinds of work, skipped and ran around like a school boy. He declared that the balmy breezes of California were filling his veins with new life. And new thoughts were filling his mind. He was most thankful that he could be of some use and help those less fortunate than himself, especially along financial lines where he felt most at home. Above all, he was thankful to the good Lord for changing his miserly, stony heart to a more loving and cheerful one.

"Causing me," he reflected, "to intensify my giving and bestowing upon me the understanding of giving in the right spirit. For the spirit of true benefaction blesses all who give freely and bountifully, knowing that the true source of all our blessings is working for the benefit of all, from the greatest to the least."

Mrs. Green prepared such good food for the workmen that the boys regretted that the time must come when their work would be finished and they would have to leave Mr. Stanton and their good meals. Uncle Tom, who took his noon meals with the workmen, remarked to his brother's wife that he had never eaten better food anywhere. She jokingly rejoined that Mrs. Green evidently knew the way to a man's heart was through good, clean, wholesome cooking!

And so the busy, happy days went by, and Uncle Tom's increasing content was so manifest that it was no surprise to any one to learn that he had won the heart and hand of Mrs. Green. The engaged couple announced their plans very simply and unaffectedly, stating that they would have a quiet wedding in the little

church and then move into their new home which Mr. Stanton was so beautifully preparing for Mrs. Green, his bride-to-be, and her children.

This announcement was soon followed by the return of the two happy young wedded couples from their honeymoon trip. The shopping for their new homes begun, and they were installed there with much content. The parents and other relatives had presented them with many handsome and valuable gifts. Lorane's aunt and uncle gave her \$50,00 all out at good interest, and presented Alzaro with a fine Edison victrola and a Buick auto. But perhaps the greatest surprise was the information that their beloved horses, Black Star and Silver-Mane, had been shipped from New York and were at their disposal in their new home.

Everything was provided by thoughtful relatives for the young couples that would make housekeeping both easy and a delight. The young folks decided to continue their lessons in music, Lorane on the harp and Louise the piano, while they would all go on with vocal instruction.

They decided to arrange so their music teachers would come out and spend the day when they took their lessons. It would be a good day's work for all. But young minds are bright and entertain high ambitions, so work will be entered into with the thought of success and all laborious effort will be eliminated and considered a privileged stepping-stone to greater success and the accomplishment of higher ideals.

The Stantons and several other wealthy and high-minded families were contemplating taking up a work that should be of benefit to all who came within the range of its influence.

So they all joined in praising God with grateful

hearts, the great Benefactor of all who put their trust implicitly in his all-providing and unerring laws.

They wanted to establish a great center of truth, where the knowledge should be imparted that those who adhere strictly to the first commandment and make its teachings practical in their everyday life would prove by the demonstration in each individual case the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. For that is the law God requires us to fulfill to be successful, harmonious and happy in this present life, that is so beautifully and orderly arranged and that God has given us the freedom to enjoy.

Remember the promises are to the faithful ones who love to do the will of God.'

LOVE

A love that loves with a love that's lovely
Is the love of my Father to me.
No matter how far I have wandered,
How many mistakes I have made,
I can hear Love calling me homeward
From morning till close of the day.
I see this pure love in the sunset,
In the stars that adorn the blue sky,
In the flowers that bloom on the hillside,
In the tint of the clouds floating high.
I see in my brothers and sisters
This love that is lovely and fair;
I feel their dear hearts beat with gladness
As they think of the Father's fond care.
I can see all the world is transforming
Till Edenic state it shall prove,
All hearts in a union of oneness
Through the power of our Father's sweet love.

THE END.

